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REMAINS
HISTORICAL & LITERARY
CONNECTED WITH THE PALATINE COUNTIES OF
LANCASTER AND CHESTER
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INTRODUCTION.

A Society, established for the publication of historical and literary remains connected with the Palatine counties of Lancaster and Chester, could not fail to direct their early attention to the history of a person so illustrious by her birth, so reputed for the sanctity of her life, so memorable for her imputed miracles, and whose name is familiar to every inhabitant of these palatine counties as the patroness saint of the cathedral of the diocese. Amongst the earliest notices issued by the Society was an announcement of their intention to publish a reprint of Henry Bradshaw's Life and History of St. Werburgh from the very rare quarto of 1521, printed by Pynsen. That intention is now fulfilled by the present volume, containing the poem of which "Harry Braddeshaa, of Chestre Abbay, monke," is partly author, partly translator.

In the "prologe of the translatour," as he calls himself, he says, p. 4.

I purpose to wryte a legende good and true
And translate a lyfe into Englysshe doubtles;

and at p. 26 gives an account of the work, which he purposes to translate.

For as declareth, the true Passyonyary
A boke wherin, her holy lyfe wryten is
Whiche boke remayneth, in Chester monastery

I purpose by helpe of Jhesu kyng of blys
 In any wyse to reherse, any sentence amys
 But folowe the legende, and true hystory
 After an humble style, and from it lytell vary.

These variations, be they "lytell" or much, seem to be founded upon histories and chronicles, which have been published, and are accessible to all who choose to trace the authorities for some of these legendary notices.

Unto this rude werke, myne auctours these shalbe
 Fyrst the true legende, and the venerable Bede
 Mayster Alfrydus, and Wyllyam Malvysburye
 Gyrarde Polycronycon, and other mo in deed. p. 5.

The "true legende" is doubtless the "true Passyonary" mentioned above, which is afterwards called the "thrid Passionary;"

And as the history, of her lyfe doth expresse
 In a boke nominat, the thrid passionary; p. 120.

which also seems to have contained an account of more miracles than the translator was perhaps quite prepared to believe, or at least did not deem it quite expedient to publish at this time.

To expresse all myracles, written in the place
 In a boke nominate, the thrid passionarye
 It wolde require, a longe tyme and space
 To the reders tedious, (nomervayle sothly)
 Where we omytte, to writte of them specially
 But touched in generall, unto your audience. p. 197.

The poem is preceded by a "Prologe in honour and laude

of Sainte Werburge and to the prayse of the translatour by J. T.," whose name and profession we have been as little able to ascertain as was Herbert, when he first noticed this work.

Of the main body of the poem then Bradshaw must be considered as a translator from a work,* in the Latin language, then remaining in the library of Chester monastery, called the true or third Passionary, inserting such additional matter as he was pleased to extract from the various chronicles which he mentions. He was however not merely a translator, but an author, for the "Prologes" to the first and second books, pp. 1 and 134, "A litell orison or prayer to the blessed virgine Saynte Werburge," p. 205, and the "breve conclusion," p. 207, are certainly original compositions of Bradshaw himself, and it is not improbable that he was also author of chapters 21 and 22, in the second book, being "A breve rehersall of the myracles of Saynt Werburge after her translacion to Chestre," and "A charitable

* The author of the original work here translated is not known, nor was Bradshaw himself acquainted with his name, for in "a Balade to the auctour," published with the translation the very year in which it was concluded, is mentioned (p. 210) that "uncertayne was his name."

Warton observes "a great translator of the lives of the Saxon Saints from the Saxon, in which language only they were then extant, into Latin, was Goscelinus, a monk of St. Austin at Canterbury, who passed from France into England about 1058. Among the rest were the lives of St. Werburgh, St. Ethelred and St. Sexburgh, most probably the legends which were Bradshaw's originals." This conjecture can scarcely be reconciled to the above assertion with regard to the original author, that "uncertayne was his name."

mocion and desyre to all the inhabytauntes within the Countie Palatine of Chestre for the monasterie."

The poem is written in stanzas of seven lines each, of which the first and third, the second, fourth and fifth, and the sixth and seventh, rhyme with each other. To this arrangement there are a few exceptions; at p. 153 is a stanza of eight lines, of which the first and third, the second, fourth, fifth and seventh, the sixth and eighth, rhyme with each other. At pp. 115, 116, 126, are three stanzas similarly arranged, in which three cases however the last line is Latin. Chapters 21, 22 and 23, and two balades at pp. 211 and 212 are all written in similar stanzas of eight lines.

Throughout the poem, in order to produce, in reading, anything of rythmical intonation, the accent must be laid strongly upon the very last syllable of the line, even in cases where, according to the modern mode of pronunciation, the last syllable is as little dwelt upon as possible. Every stanza affords instances of this intonation, and it is scarcely necessary to refer to any particular passages, but in p. 125, the following illustrations may be observed, — gostly and remedy, parte and trinite, odour, savour, hour; body, clergy, verily, &c. &c.

The Latin language was probably very familiar to our author, for the reader can scarcely fail to be struck with the frequent introduction of quaint Latinisms. At p. 150 we find "With grace circumfulced and lyghtned was England." In the same page he talks of faith enduring "without recidivation," and in p. 152, of faith being "remanent;" we find "promyttynge," p. 163, 166; "facundious," p. 209,

210 ; “desydery,” 56, and several others may be discovered by consulting the glossary. The greater number of these words it will be perceived were derived directly from the Latin, but not unfrequently, as is most usual in writers of that age, the Latinisms appear to have been introduced under the influence of the French language upon our own, rather than directly from the Latin. At p. 153, he speaks of St. Alban’s monastery being edified, from *edifier* ; p. 115, of this life being *caduce* ; p. 137, of the abbey of Chester envired with walles ; baptism is written baptym, *baptime* ; convent, *covent* ; sautyng, from *assaut* ; and dygne of dutye, from *digne*. The termination of the past tense, derived from the Latin participle, is of almost universal occurrence, as maculate, preparate, coronate, nominat, tumulate, &c. &c.

At pp. 147, 158 and 179 are quotations from Henry of Huntingdon, which contain some errors ; it is as well therefore to reprint them here from Savile’s edition of that author.

p. 147.

Nobilitas innata tibi probitatis honorem
 Armipotens Alfrede dedit, probitasque laborem,
 Perpetuumque labor nomen, cui mixta dolori
 Gaudia semper erant ; spes semper mixta timori.
 Si modo victor eras, ad crastina bella pavebas.
 Si modo victus eras, ad crastina bella parabas.

Jam post transactos vitæ regnique dolores
 Christus ei sit vera quies, sceptrumque perenne.

Henrici Huntingdoniensis, Hist. lib. v.

p. 158.

O Elfreda potens, O terror virgo virorum
 Victrix naturæ, nomine digna viri.
 Tu quo splendidior fieres, natura puellam,
 Te probitas fecit nomen habere viri
 Te mutare decet sed solam, nomina sexus,
 Tu regina potens, rexque trophæa parans.
 Jam nec Cæsarei tantum meruere triumpho
 Cæsare splendidior virgo virago vale. *Ibid.*

p. 179.

Auctor opum, vindex scelerum, largitor honorum,
 Sceptriger Edgarus regna superna petit.
 Hic alter Salomon, legum pater, orbita pacis;
 Quod caruit bellis claruit inde magis.
 Templâ Deo, templis monachos, monachis dedit agros
 Nequitie lapsus, justitiæque locum. *Ibid.*

In the quotation from William of Malmsbury, p. 176, in the last line, for "a" read "de."

The first book of this poem contains an account of the descent of St. Werburge from four royal families, her character, the history of her life and those of some of her more immediate relations; it also relates the principal circumstances of her death and subsequent removal and condition of her body. The second book is chiefly devoted to the circumstances which connected her with the city of Chester, of which she was considered the patron saint. The author at p. 4 calls her prioress and lady of the Abbey of Chester: but she was never so, except under the general appointment of Ethelred, who made her (p. 85)

lady ruler and presydent
 Over all the nonnes, of every monastery
 Within his realme.

Ethelred indeed (p. 86)

Edyfyed a collage chyrche, notable and famous
 In the subbarbes of Chester, pleasaunt and beauteous
 In honour of God, and the Baptyst Saynt Johan,

but it does not appear that she had any authority in this establishment, and indeed this foundation had not any connexion with the Abbey of Chester.

It is probable that he calls her "Pryores" of the Abbey merely because she was enshrined there, and was considered the patroness saint of that monastery and city.

To this imputed patronage of the city and its religious establishments we doubtless owe the existence of this poem; for when the translator felt that as "a relygyous man, losynge of tyme could not him excuse, and that for avoiding such great folyshenes he ressolved

Some small treatyse to wryte brevely" p. 4.

there can be little doubt that he was led to the choice of his subject from a desire to do honour to

Blessed vyrgyn Werburge, my holy patronesse, p. 5.

indeed he acknowledges as much in his "breve conclusion,"

The cause movyng us, this werke to begyn
 It was to avoyde, slouth and idelnes
 And most for the love, of this holy virgin
 Whiche is our sufferayn lady and patrones. p. 209.

b

The reader will probably not be displeased that this poem should be accompanied by Warton's criticisms and estimate of its character, which are, therefore, here quoted at length.

"Henry Bradshaw has rather larger pretensions to poetical fame than William of Nassington, although scarcely deserving the name of an original writer in any respect. Before the year 1500 he wrote the *Life of St. Werburge*, a daughter of a King of the Mercians, in English verse. This poem, beside the devout deeds and passion of the poet's patroness saint, comprehends a variety of other subjects; as a description of the kingdom of the Mercians, the lives of Saint Ethelred and Saint Werburge, the foundation of the city of Chester and a chronicle of our Kings. It is collected from Bede, Alfred of Beverley, Malmesbury, Gerardus Cambrensis, Higden's *Polychronicon*, and the *Passionaries* of the female Saints Werburgh, Ethelred and Sexburgh, which were kept for public edification in the choir of our poet's monastery. Bradshaw is not so fond of relating visions and miracles as his argument seems to promise. Although concerned with three saints, he deals more in plain facts than in the fictions of religious romance; and, on the whole, his performance is rather historical than legendary. This is remarkable in an age when it was the fashion to turn history into legend.

"His fabulous origin of Chester is not so much to be imputed to his own want of veracity as to the authority of his voucher, Ranulph Higden, a celebrated chronicler, his countryman, and a monk of his own abbey. He supposes

that Chester, called by the ancient Britons *Caer Lleon*, or, the city of legions was founded by *Leon gaur*, a giant, corrupted from *Leon vaur*, a great legion.

The founder of Chestre, as sayth Policronicon
Was *Lleon Gauer*, a myghty stronge gyaunt
Whiche buylded caves, and dongions many one
No goodly buyldyng, propre ne pleasaunt — p. 148.

he adds with equal attention to etymology,

But the *Kynge Leil*, a Briton sure and valiaunt
Was founder of Chestre, by pleasaunt buyldyng
And of *Caerleil*, also named by the kynge. p. 148.

But a greater degree of credulity would perhaps have afforded him a better claim to the character of a poet; and, at least we should have conceived a more advantageous opinion of his imagination had he been less frugal of those traditionary fables, in which ignorance and superstition had clothed every head of his argument.

“The most splendid passage of this poem is the description of the feast (ch. xvi. pp. 58—65) made by King *Wulfer* in the Hall of the Abbey of *Ely* when his daughter *Werbuge* was admitted to the veil in that monastery; among other curious anecdotes of ancient manners, the subjects of the tapestry with which the hall was hung, and of the songs sung by the minstrels on this solemn occasion, are given at large.

“If there be any merit of imagination or invention to which the poet has a claim in this description, it altogether consists in the application. The circumstances themselves

are faithfully copied by Bradshaw from what his own age actually presented. In this respect, I mean as a picture of ancient life, the passage is interesting, and for no other reason. The versification is infinitely inferior to Lydgate's worst manner.

"Bale, a violent reformer, observes that our poet was a person remarkably pious for the times in which he flourished. This is an indirect satire on the monks and on the period which preceded the Reformation. I believe it will readily be granted that our author had more piety than poetry. His prologue contains humble professions of his inability to treat lofty subjects and to please light readers."

Warton's remarks are too disparaging; Dibdin, who gives an extended account of the poem, forms a higher estimate of Bradshaw's merit. "It is presumed," he observes, "that his name will stand among the foremost in the list of the poets of the period wherein he wrote. His descriptions are oftentimes happy as well as minute; and there is a tone of moral purity and rational piety in his thoughts, enriched by the legendary lore of romance that renders many passages of his poem exceedingly interesting."

If it is not allowed to rank Bradshaw, according to Dibdin's estimate, among the foremost in the list of poets of his period, it is unjust to place him in so low a rank among his cotemporaries as the severity of Warton seems to demand. There is a tone of moral principle and devotional piety so unaffectedly pervading the whole volume, and so easily and naturally introduced, as to impress the reader with the conviction that they had an

habitual influence upon his mind and heart, and exhibited themselves without an effort and almost unconsciously in all his expressions. There is much strength and apparent sincerity in his numerous exhortations to piety and devotion. In his "charitable mocion," (ch. xxii. p. 199 et seq.) he urges his readers to benevolence and to the support of the monastery, with great power, and sets before them every variety of motive that could be supposed to influence persons under the peculiar circumstances in which each might be placed. He appeals to the piety of their forefathers, and endeavours to work upon all their passions, affections and emotions, upon their love and fear, gratitude and duty. His familiarity with the Latin language has been already noticed, and the reader can scarcely have failed to observe his intimate acquaintance with the sacred writings, numerous scripture personages are adduced as models and examples of the various virtues, which adorn the christian character; and the language of scripture is constantly apparent in his exhortations and descriptions, especially where the character and acts of St. Werburge are his subjects. Moral maxims and proverbs, the concentrated wisdom of ages, seem to have been familiar to him, and may be detected in many of his pages. If

Manners maketh man
Quoth William of Wykeham,

Bradshaw observes,

by a proverbe certan

Good maners and conynge maken a man, p. 134.

another of his proverbs is worth pointing out, as it exem-

plifies the use of the word "lad" to signify a person of low degree,

by a proverb auneyent

A lad to wedde a lady is an inconvenyent. p. 38.

The sententious brevity of a proverb is sometimes lost and weakened by adapting it to the metre of his poem ; Man proposes, God disposes, is expanded into

Tho mankynde prepose his mynde to fulfyll
Yet God dysposeth all thynges at his wyll. p. 119.

The remark of Warton is probably just, that had he had a greater degree of credulity he would have had a greater chance of being poetical ; credulity indeed does not seem to be his failing, for though he records many miracles of St. Werburge and with some appearance of belief in their reality, it is quite clear that he omits many marvellous tales, which might have been supplied by the original work, but which would be to the "reders tedious (no mervayle sothly)," and to which he was not himself quite prepared to give full credit. It is true that he gives more, many more, than sufficient to satisfy any modern readers ; but the Reformation was approaching, the shadows of coming events were already apparent, and were exerting their almost unobserved influence upon the feelings and opinions of the people, and Bradshaw had evidently less faith in the miraculous legends of his monastery, than had been enjoyed by his predecessors ; in truth there appears to be occasionally a lurking humour in his description, which betrays as much disbelief in his own narrative, as the temper of the times, and the still lingering credulity of his cotemporaries would permit. If his

own good sense and the growing enfranchisement of the period from the bondage of superstition, and papal impositions, checked in him any tendency to imaginative flights and poetic paroxysms; it will not be denied that he frequently exhibits considerable strength of expression in his language, and great powers in his vivid and graphic descriptions. A goodly specimen of railing may be found in Book I. ch. x. where St. Ermenylde, St. Werburge and her brothers severely rebuke Werbode for his "grevous presumpcyon" in aspiring to the hand of St. Werburge. Many of the miraculous cures are described with great force; and it will be difficult to find, in any cotemporary author, so lively, picturesque and humorous a narrative as that of the unhappy geese of Wedon

who went

Mekely as yf they had reason naturall
Unto her presence,

and with

Theyr wynges traylynge entred into the hall. p. 98, 99.

Had his merits as a writer been less than they really are, his meek and humble apology for his defects, which he puts forth in his "breve conclusion," would deprecate all severity of criticism. He had clearly not a musical ear, his versification is not smooth and harmonious, and his naturally defective appreciation of rythmical intonation has been much exaggerated by the awkward and difficult arrangement of the stanza which he has adopted. With an easier metre his lines might have flowed with more ease and grace, and would have better conciliated the favour of his readers.

Rugged however and harsh as his verse may be, and low as may be the estimation of Bradshaw as a poet, the amiable and pious tone of the whole poem cannot but impress the mind with agreeable feelings, and excite admiration and affection towards him as a man and a christian.

Of Henry Bradsha, Braddshaa or Bradshaw, who calls himself, p. 3, "a religious man," *i. e.* an ecclesiastic, nothing more is known than what is recorded by Anthony Wood, who says, "he was born in the auncient town of Westchester, commonly called the city of Chester, and being much addicted to religion and learning, when a youth, was received among the Benedictine monks of St. Werburgh's monastery in the said city. Thence at riper years he was sent to Gloucester college in the suburb of Oxon, where after he had passed his course in theology among the novices of his order he returned to his cell at St. Werburge and in his elder years wrote, *De antiquitate et magnificentia urbis Cestriæ chronicon*, etc. and translated from Latin into English a book which he thus entitled, *The life of the glorious Virgin St. Werburge: Also many miracles that God had shewed for her*. London, 1521, 4to. He died in fifteen hundred and thirteen (5 Henry 8) and was buried in his monastery, leaving then behind him other matters to posterity, but the subject of which they treat I know not."—Athen. Oxon. edit. by Dr. Bliss, v. I. p. 18.

The date of his death is expressly stated in "A balade to the auctor," which is appended to the poem, by some unknown friend, and, probably, monk of the same monastery.

He laments the death of Bradshaw,

a floure most riall
 Redolent in cronicles with historicall syght
 Whiche nowe is departed from this temporall lyght
 The present yere of this translacion
 M.D.XIII. of Christis incarnation
 Cujus anime propicietur deus. p. 210.

Of the works of Bradshaw above mentioned or alluded to, that "De antiquitate et magnificentia," etc., nothing is now known, but it is not improbable that some fragments dispersed in various MSS. descriptive of this city may have been extracted from his chronicle. The life of the glorious virgin St. Werburge is the work which is here reprinted. Of the "other matters to posterity" nothing more is positively known to us than to Wood, but Mr. Herbert was in possession of a poem, "The lyfe of St. Radegunde," also printed by Pynson, of which he says, "although the name of the author or translator of this book does not decidedly appear on the face of it, yet on comparing it with the Life of St. Werburge it may readily be perceived that both were penned by the same person, Henry Bradshaw ; but hitherto omitted in every list of his works." *Typographical Antiquities*, p. 294.

Mr Cowper in his Summary of the life of St. Werburgh quotes more than once the Latin life of this lady by Bradshaw, and these extracts he derives from Leland's *Collectanea*, but where this collector discovered his original authority does not appear. Mr. Cowper is probably mistaken in ascribing the work to Bradshaw's own pen ; it is much more probable

that the extracts are derived from the original chronicle or passionary, which Bradshaw translated into English verse, for he has himself distinctly stated that his poem was a translation from a Latin history preserved in his monastery; he gives no intimation of his having written it himself, and it is also stated that the name of the original author was unknown.

Although this work is of very great rarity, it is not so much so as was at one time supposed. The earliest mention of the book, which we have discovered, is by Maittaire, who in 1741 inserts it in a list of books not before noticed. In 1749, Ames in his *Typographical Antiquities*, mentions the work, and so describes it as to leave no doubt of his having had a copy before him. Notwithstanding all this, Dr. Foote Gower in his "*Sketch of Materials for the History of Cheshire*" in 1771, doubts the existence of such a printed volume; and in a subsequent advertisement, arguing upon the evidence for and against the existence of such a work, adds "no possible enquiries of mine have been able to discover the least trace of it, in any private as well as in any public repository," and closes the difficulty with the good humoured expression of Sir Roger de Coverly, "that much may be said on both sides."

There are, however, at least five copies in existence; one is in the Minster Library at York, and my kind friend Mr. Davies informs me that it is in modern binding, that it is imperfect at the beginning, wanting the first 22 pages, the first present leaf being C. 1. on page 23, that it is otherwise

clean and in good preservation. It once belonged to Dr. Marmaduke Fothergill, and in the margin of one of the leaves near the close of the book, appears the name of Gervas Clifton, to whom it had at one time probably belonged.

Two copies are in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, one of which had been purchased at Warwick, July 2, 1730, by Mr. West, at the sale of whose books in 1773, it was bought by Mr. Gough, for £2. 15s. and with the other treasures of his collection now reposes in the Bodleian.

The other copy belonging to the same library bears the autographs of former owners "Wylliã. Watson," "Richard Cartwright," "Homfree," "William Peate," "John, and Mary Seres," and on one margin appears "John . . (cut off.)"

So God me save he is a loute
I put you all out of doute
By me John Beade, draper."

It was subsequently the property of Selden, from whom it passed to the Bodleian.

A fourth copy is in the British Museum. In the sale catalogue of the books of Mr. Marten of Palgrave, in lot 196, was a Life of St. Werburgh, which is supposed to be the same copy which came into the Pearson Library, which was sold in 1788, (lot 2374 the Life of St. Werburgh) and was bought by Isaac Reed for £1. 3s. At his sale in 1807 it formed lot 6972, and was purchased by I. L., i. e. I. Lochee, the auctioneer in King Street, Covent Garden, for £18. He is supposed to have purchased it for Mr. Parke, the editor and enlarger of Walpole's Royal and Noble Authors, who

afterwards sold it for 28 guineas to Mr. Heber, who inserted in the volume the following note. "This book is of the first order of rarity, not being in the Royal, British Museum, Bodleian, Spencer, Hunter, Blenheim, or Blandford collections, indeed no other copy is known to exist in any repository public or private, except one in Mr. Heber's library. Mr. Heber paid 28 guineas to Mr. P— for his copy 10 years ago, a time when 5s. went further in the purchase of a scarce book than a pound sterling does now." This note upon a scrap of paper was probably intended as a communication to some friend, perhaps to Mr. Dibdin, and, after having been copied for that purpose, was pasted into the volume as it now appears. At Mr. Heber's sale in 1834 it was purchased for the British Museum for £19. 5s.

The fifth copy is probably the one stated by Herbert, in his edition of Ames' *Typographical Antiquities*, to have been then in his own possession, and which is supposed to have passed into the hands of Mr. Woodhouse, in whose sale in 1803 it was lot 859, and was sold to Mr. Hill, the prototype of Paul Pry, for £31. 10s. This gentleman's library, rich in early poetry, was sold to Messrs. Longman, and Co., and was the foundation of their "*Bibliotheca Anglo-poetica*," in which this book was priced £63., and sold to Mr. Midgely, whose library was brought to the hammer in 1818 at Messrs. Saunders, when this rare volume was purchased by Mr. Hibbert for £42. At this gentleman's sale it was purchased by Thorpe for £19. 10s., from whom it passed to the library of Mr. Miller, the present possessor.

It may be remarked that this work is the earliest, in print, which refers to Hugh Lupus, Earl of Chester, and his dignity in the earldom, see pp. 181, 182. The passage was cited in an affidavit made in 1843 in "the Consistory Court of Chester," and appears in an Appendix to an appeal from "the Chancery Court of York, in the goods of Anne Rothwell Wignall, commonly called Anne Rothwell, Spinster, deceased, in the Judicial Committee of Her Majesty's most honourable Privy Council."

The errors in this reprint that may be chargeable to the press occur at

page 18, line 9, T *read* To,

page 94, line 10, ha *read* had,

page 99, line 15, compassyon *read* compassyon,

and page 112, last line but one, Gorrupte *read* Corrupte ; but it is to be feared that some trifling errors in transcription, such as kingdome for kyndome, befound for befounde, us for vs, would be discovered by an accurate collation. Pynson is not uniform in the use of his i, his y, and the insertion or omission of the final e.

The collation of the book is thus : it commences with the Title-page and Wood-cut of St. Werburge, The prologe of J. T. and the Table of the boke, the second Title-page, with

the Wood-cut repeated and reiterated at the back, and then follows the Poem, commencing with signature **a** and ending on **g iiii.**, the reverse bearing Pynson's device.

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|-------------|------------------|----------|----------|---|---|------------|
| a ii | containing pages | 1 to 14 | k | „ | „ | 111 to 118 |
| b | „ | 15 — 22 | l | „ | „ | 119 — 134 |
| c | „ | 23 — 38 | m | „ | „ | 135 — 142 |
| d | „ | 39 — 46 | n | „ | „ | 143 — 158 |
| e | „ | 47 — 62 | o | „ | „ | 159 — 166 |
| f | „ | 63 — 70 | p | „ | „ | 167 — 182 |
| g | „ | 71 — 86 | q | „ | „ | 183 — 190 |
| h | „ | 87 — 94 | r | „ | „ | 191 — 206 |
| i | „ | 95 — 110 | s | „ | „ | 207 — 214 |

A Glossary and Index are added.

The following genealogical tables are drawn up from the third chapter of the Poem, which professes to trace the descent of St. Werburge from four "Kynges of this lande, and of the riall blodde of Fraunce." Table V. has been compiled from the other four. They do not profess to be correct genealogies, nor has any attempt been made to reconcile the discrepancies which occur in various chronicles, nor even in this history. They are merely intended as aids to the reader by presenting to him, in a tabular form, that which the author gives as narrative.

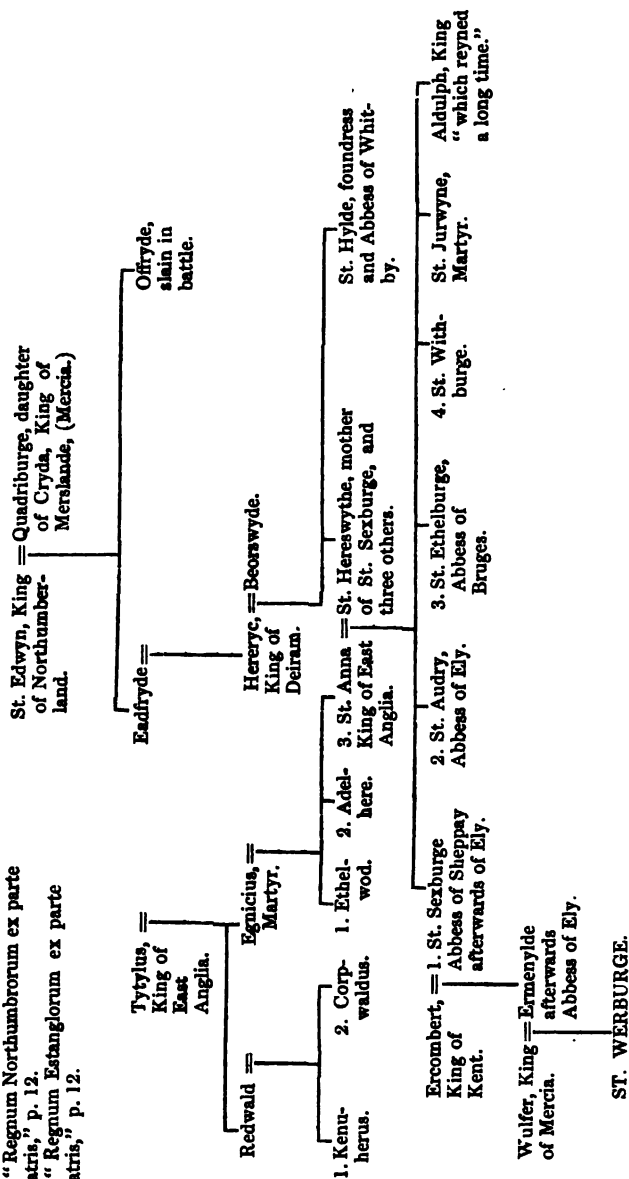
Cryda, King of =
Mercia, A. D.
594.



TABLE II. & III.

"Regnum Northumbrorum ex parte

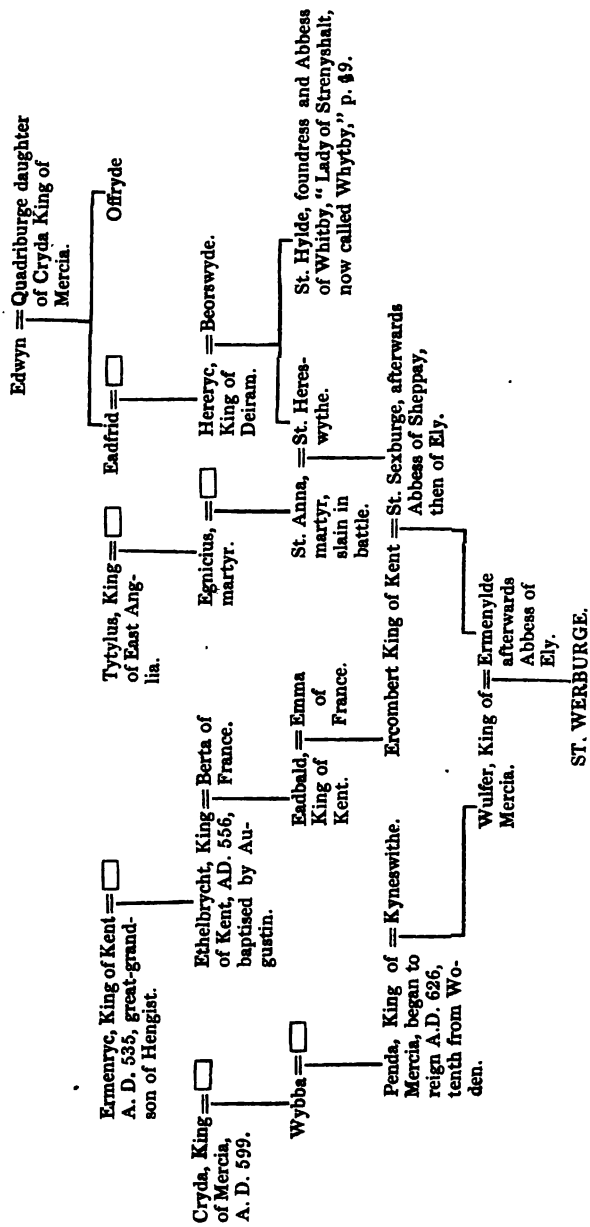
"Regnum Estanglorum ex parte



Hengystus, fourth from Woden, who was the 15th from Noe, by Sem, the eldest son.



TABLE V.



**¶ Here begynneth the holy lyfe and history
of saynt werburge / very frutefull
for all christen people
to rede.**



The prologe of J.C. in the honour & laude of saint
Werburge / and to the prayse of p^r translatour
of the legende folowynge.

Honour / ioye / and glorie / the toynes organicall
Endeles myrthes wth melodies / prayse ye all p^r princes
Nourished in vertue / intact / as pure as cristall
Relese to all synners / o werburge lady maistres
In grace thou passed / all other and in goodnes
Whan thou was present in this mundayne lyfe
None was the lyke / wydowe / mayde / ne wyfe

By diuine grace / to vs a ryche present
Reioyce we may / in Werburge one and all
A gemme of vertue / a virgin resplendent
Dilect of our lorde (in ioye and blis eternall
Surely she is set) to intercede and call
Her mouth nat cessyng / for them to call and crye
And in her trust / of synne to haue mercy

O good lady maistres / declpne thy syght afer
And graciously beholde / thy seruauit chaste and pure
Henry Bradsha / sometyme monke in Chester
Whiche only for thy loue / toke the payne and labour
Thy legende to translate / he dyd his busy cure
Out of latine / in Englyshe rude ande and byle
Whiche he hath amended / with many an ornat style

Alas of Chestre / ye monkes haue lost a treasure
Henry Bradsha / the styfe of eloquence
Chestre thou may wayle / the deth of this flourre

So may the citezens / alas for his absence
 So may many other / for lacke of his sentence
 O swete lady Werburge / an holy Abbasse glorious
 Remembre Henry Bradsha / thy seruait most gracio^s

In hym remaind no vice ne presumption
 Enuy and wrath / from hym were expyled
 Slooth ne Aenus in hym had no dominion
 Auarice and glotony / he btterly expelled
 No vice in hym reigned / his felowes he excelled
 As clene as cristall / he bare these vertues thre
 Chastite / obidience / and wylfull pouerte

O cruell deth / whiche art the perfitte ende
 Of this noble clerke / and euery mortall thyng
 Agaynst the / no man may hym defende
 Thou causest wo / langour / and anguissyng
 And who on this / wolde haue remembryng
 Howe from erth / to erth he must agayne
 He wolde dispise all thynges that be mundayne. Vale.

The table of this boke.

First the prologue of the translatour of this litell
 treatyse Cap.i.

A description of the realme of merciēs of the boōdes
 and commodites of the same Cap.ii.

A description of the geanologie of saynt Werburge
 and howe she descended of .iiii. kynges of this lāde / and
 of the riall blodde of Fraunce Cap.iii.

C ii.

¶ A playn descripcion of the actz and chivalry of kyng
Penda graūtfather to saynt Werburge / and of his no-
ble and vertuous progenie. Cap.iiii.

¶ Howe after the deth of kyng Pēda / and of his prince
Pēda his secōde son Wulfer father of saynt Werburge
was elect to be kyng of mercieng. Cap.v.

¶ A lyttell descripcyon of the noble maryage bytwene
kyng Wulfer and saynt Ermenild, the kyngz doughter
of Kent / and of the solempnite done at the same season
The syxt chapitre.

¶ A breue declaracion of the holy lyfe and conuersaciō
of saynt Werburge / bled in her tender youth / aboute the
comon cours of nature. Cap.vii.

¶ Howe this yonge virgin saynt Werburge was desi-
red of dukes and erles in mariage / and of the reasona-
ble answer she gaue to them in auoydyng suche word-
ly pleasures. Cap.viii.

¶ Howe the false Werrebode desyred Kyng Wulfer to
haue his doughter Werburge in mariage / and howe he
graunted therunto. Cap.ix.

¶ Howe the quene saynt Ermenild, wolde nat content
therto / & how her bretherne saynt Wulfade / and Ruffin
were agaynst the sayd mariage. Cap.x.

¶ How the false Werrebode complaynned vpon saynt

**Wulfade & Ruffyn to kyng Wulfer/and was the cause
of their deth. Cap.xi.**

**¶ Howe kyng Wulfer was conuerted / and toke great
repentaunce for his offence . and by the counsell of saint
Ceade was a deuout man / and a good benefactour to
holy churche/and founder of diuers places Cap.xii.**

**¶ Of the feruent desire & singular deuocion saynt Wer-
burge had to be religious / and of the dayly supplicati-
ons she made to her father for the same. Cap.xiii.**

**¶ Of the reasonable & meke answere saynt Werburge
gaue to her father / whan he moued her to haue ben ma-
ried. Cap.xiiii.**

**¶ How saint Werburge was made an nōne at Ely aft
her desire vnder saint Audri lady and abbasse. Ca.xv.**

**¶ Of the great solemnifacion kyng Wulfer made at y^r
gostly mariage of saynt Werburge his dought at Ely /
to all his louers and frendes. Cap.xvi.**

**¶ Of the holy profession and gostly cōuersacion saynt
Werburge bled at Ely i religio bnd^s saint Audri. xvi.**

**A litell treatise of the lyfe of saynt Audrie abbasse of
Ely / & of her holy conuersacion & great deuocion which
Audrie was aunt and colyn to saynt Werburge. xviii.**

**¶ A breue reherfal of the lyfe of saint Serburge graūt
C.iii.**

moder to saint werburge / & of her comyng to Ely to her
lyst Audrie thabbasse from Shepay monasterie. c.xix.

¶ Howe saint Ermentid, after dethe of kyng Mulser
was made a noune at Ely / under her moder Serburge
and Werburge her doughter. Cap.xx.

¶ Howe kyng Ethelrede seyng the holy conuersaciō
of Werburge his nece / made her lady and president at
Medon / Trentā / & Hambury. Also by her example and
counsel made hym a monke at Bardeney abbay. c.xxi.

¶ The holy cōuersaciō of kyng Rēred brother to saynt
Werburge / & howe he refused his crowne / & was made
a monke at Rome / & there deptyed a holy cōfessour. xxi.

¶ Of the godly deuociō of saynt Werburge & bertuo'
gouernans of her places / and of the great humilite she
bled to her systers and all creatures. Ca.xxi.

¶ Howe at Medō wilde gyle were pynned at her cōmā-
dement / and also relefed & put at liberte. Ca.xxi.

¶ How a tyrande without pite was punysshed his face
set backewarde / and by his mekenes was restaured to
helth and prosperite agayne. Cap.xx.

¶ How deuers princes folowynge sensualite entēdyng
to violate this virgine by power : by myracle were put
to confusio. Cap.xxi.

¶ How saynt Werburge gaue knowlege to her systers

of her departure / & howe she ordeed in vertue her sayd
monasteries after her departure. Cap.xxvii.

¶ Of the godly exortaciō saint Werburge made to her
systers in her sekenes / and howe deuoutly she receyued
the sacramētes of holy church afore her deth. c.xxviii.

¶ Of the departure of saynt Werburge at Crētā vnto
heuen frō this miserable lyfe / & what lamētacion her sy-
sters and subiectes made for her deth. Ca.xxix.

¶ Howe the hāburgenz toke the blessed body of Wer-
burge frō Crētā by myracle & brought it to Hābury /
and of the buriall of this virgin / and manyfolde signes
shewed of god by her merites / the space of .ix. yere afore
her translatiō. Cap.xxx.

¶ A litel breue treatise of her hole lyfe / and how for her
myracles shewed after her deth / the couent of Hamburi
purposed to trāslat her body by helpe of kyng Coelrede
reignyng in mercelande. Ca.xxxi.

¶ The solemnpne translatiō of this glorious virgine
saynt Werburge . and of the great myracles done at the
same season by the might of god / and merite of this gra-
cious lady. Ca.xxxii.

¶ Howe the body of saynt Werburge continued hole /
& substācial at Hāmbury after y^e trāslaciō by the space
of .CC. yeres / tyll the danes were comon to this lande /
or it fell & resolued was vnto powder. Cap.xxxiii.

**¶ Here foloweth the lyfe of the glory=
 ous vîrgyn saynt werburge/also
 many mîracles that god hath
 shewed for her/ & fyrst the
 prologe of the au=
 ctour.**





The prologe of the translatour of this lytell werke y^e
lyfe of saynt Werburge.



When Phebus had roſe his cours i ſagittari
And Capricorne entred a ſygne retrograt
Amyddes Decēbre / y^e ayre colde & froſty
And pale Lucyna / the erthe dyd illumynat
I roſe bp ſhortly / fro my cubycle preparat
Aboute mydnyght / and caſt in myne intent
How I myght ſpende / the tyme conuenient.

I called vnto mynde / the great vnſtedfaſtneſſe
Of this wretched worlde / not by cours of nature
How there be brought / ſome men to buſynes
Oppreſſed with pouerte / langour / and dyſpleaſure
Some other exalted / to ſelycyte and pleaſure
The maker of mankynde / moſt in maieſte
Ruleth all at his wyll / it may non other be.

Beholde dyſcretly / and ſe the ſyrment
Conſyder the ſonne / and the mone alſo
With all the planettes / and ſterres reſplendent
How they kepe theyr cours / bothe to and fro
Euer obedyent / theyr creature vnto
And byrdes beſely ſyngynge euery day
Prayſynge theyr prymate all that they may.

The iiij elementes / in lyke condycyon
The fyre / the water / the ayre / and the londe
Obſerben theyr duty / after theyr creacyon
And burum ben / and euer ſo be ſonde
Thus euery creature / as we underſtonde
Werburge

a. ii.

Obeeth to his creature / with humplyte
Except dyslolute man / folowynge sensualyte.

If man wyll remembre / how he was create
To the lykenes and figure / of god almyghty
And set in paradyse / a place moost delycate
To haue the fruycon / of eternall glory /
If not synne expulsed hym / to the bale of mysery
But that he wolde enclyne / his naturall reason
To serue his maker / truely at due season.

Dyuers people / haue dyuers condicions
Comynly proued / it is euery day
Some set to vertu / and good disposycions
In penaunce / prayer / all that they may
Some in contemplacyon / the sothe to say
Some in abstynence / to chastyce the body
And make it subget / to the soule perfyte.

Some other reioyce / in synne and ydelnes
Some seruauntes to Venus / both day and nyght
Other to couetyse / and worldly besynes
Some to deceyue / by subtylte in fyght
Some into marchandyse / a wynnynge full ryght
Some ferefull and tymorous / without audacyte
Some sadde and sobre / and of great grauyte.

Many haue pleasure to speke of rybaudry
Some of fyghtynge / braulynge / and actes marcyall
Other to flater / and paynt the company
Some to syt bytweene the cuppe and the wall
Some to blasphemie / and dyssemble withall

To backbyte and slaūder / by malyce and enby
Some to extorcyon / thefte and playne robbery.

Thus after fraylte / and sundry compleccyons
Dyuers men dyuers in lyuynge there be
Dysposed by a contrary dysposycyon
Some vnto vertue / some vnto vanyte
Many maners of people / now we may se
Clauerynge in the worlde / without quyetyes
As a shyp by tempest / is dryuen doubteles.

When I reuolued / with due circumstance
The dyuers maners / and mutabyltye
Of worldly people / and the great varyaunce
And how this lyfe / is of no suerte
Now in great langour / now in prosperyte
Yet after our meryte / we shal be sure
To be rewarded / at our departure.

Chan to vertuous labours / we shulde apply
And spende not our tyme / all in ydlenes
For as a byrde is made / by nature to fly
Ryght so we shulde be / some good busynes
To our soule helthe / with great mekenes
For tyme euyl spende in labours bayne
Is harde to be well / recovered agayne

But now syth I am / a relygyous man
For losynge of tyme / can not me excuse
Therefore I purpose / to do as I can
All suche ydlenes / whylom to refuse
With the grace of god / the tyme for to be
Werburge.

a. iii.

Some small treatyse / to wryte breuely
To the comyn bulgares theyr mynde to satysfy.

To descrybe hys hystories / I dare not be so bolde
Syth it is a mater / for clerkes conuenient
As of the. vii. aeges / and of our parentes olde
Or of the. iiii. empyres / whylom moost excellent
Knowynge my lernynge / therto insuffycient
As for bawdy balades / ye shall haue none of me
To excyte lyght hertes / to pleasure and banyshe.

But now in auoydynge / suche great folysshenes
I purpose to wryte / a legende good and true
And translate a lyfe / into Englyshe doubtles
I meane the spouse / of our lorde Ihesu
Blessed saynt Werburge / replete with vertue
A noble prynces borne / a byrgyne pure and glourous
After an holy monyall / and an abbess gracyous.

In the abbay of Chestre / she is thryned ryche
Prynces and lady / of that holy place
The chyef protectryce / of the sayd monastery
Longe before the conquest / by deuyn grace
Protectryce of the Cytee / she is and euer was
Called specyall prymate / and pryncypall presydent
There rulyng vnder / our lorde omnyppotent.

And yf I unworthy / begynne this lytell werke
I praye all the reders / mekely of pardon
To correcke and amende / syth I am no clerke
Excuse my ignoraunce / and take the entencion
My mynde is to shewe / her lyfe and deuocyon

That euery man and woman / ensample maye take
At this pure byrgyn / synne to forsake.

And syth that she is in blysse now gloryfied
It were no reason / her name be had in scyence
But to the people / her name be magnyfied
To her laude and prayse / honour and reuerence
Her parentes and bretherne / y^e floures of experyence
Haue ben kepte in close / secrete many a day
Wherefore I purpose / somewhat of them to say.

Fyrst I entende / to make playne descrypcyon
Of her fathers kyngedome the realme of Mercens
How longe it endured / under his turycon
Under how many kynges / it had prehemynens
Also of her petygre / the noble excellence
For so many sayntes / of one kyndred certayne
Is harde to be founde / in all the worlde agayne.

Unto this rude werke / myne auctours these shalbe
Fyrst the true legende / and the venerable Bede
Mayster Alfydus and Wyllyam Malurysburge
Gyrarde / Polycronycon / and other mo in deed
Now glorious god / graunt me to procede
Blessed byrgyn Werburge / my holy patronesse
Helpe me to endyte / I praye the swete maystresse.

¶ A descrypcyon of the realme of Mercens / of bondes
and commodytes of the same.

The yere of our Sauoure / by full cumpulacyon
foure hundred / nyne & fourty frome his natiuite
Werburge.

a. iiii.

As venerable Bede / maketh declaracyon
Duke Hengyst came to this lande in great royalte
With Saxons / Angles / Jutes / thre people myghtye
Desyred by Mortyger / than kynge of Brytons
Came to defende / fro greuous oppressyons.

Also the yeres of our blessed saupoure
Syre hundreth foure score and nyne expresse
The Brytons were expelled / so sayth myne auctoure
From Englande to walles / with great wretchydnes
In Englande than ruled / seuen kynges doubtles
Whose names we purpose / to shewe with lycens
But pryncypally / of the kingdome of Mercyens.

The fyrst realme of Saxons / began in Kent
The yere of grace / foure hundreth fyue and fyrty
Where duke Engystus / in honour excellent
With sceptre and crowne / fyrst reigned royally
The seconde was Southsex / sayth the hystory
Where Adla and Ella / reigned full ryght
Whiche realme endured / but short tyme in myght.

The thyrde was West saxons / famous and myghty
Where fyrst reigned kynge Cerdicus
The yere of our lorde / fyue hundreth one and twenty
Whiche realme by proesse / and power byctoryous
Subdued all other / to hym full memorous
The pryncypall Cytees / of his regalyte
Were in olde season / Wynchester and Salesburge.

The fourth was Essex / where duke Erchenwyr
Fyrst reigned kynge / haupnge domynacyon

By the kynge of Mercelande / brought ofte to ruyne
The chyfe Cytee was Colchester / of his domynyon
Also of east Englande / was the fyfth kyngdome
Where Uffa crowned / had fyrst the sufferaynte
Of Northfolke and Southfolke / knowen in certaynte.

The fyrthe was the kyngdome of Mercelande
Where Cryda was crowned fyrst by auctoryte
Hauynge nyne thyres / obedyent to his hande
As after shall appere / more euydent to be
The seuenth was Northüberlande / vnder Ida & Alle
Whylom dryyded / in sondry kyngdomes twayne
The chyfe Cytee was yorke / wher y^e kynge dyd reygne.

The realme of Mercyens / by olde antyquyte
As playnly declareth / Polycronycon
Thre hundreth yeres / endured in auctoryte
Under eyghtene kynges / worthy nomynyon
Greatest of gouernaunce of all this regyon
Where Mulser reygned / a kynge byctoryous
Father to saynt Werburge / byrgyn moost glorious.

The boundes and lorthyppes / of the sayd Mercyens
As shewen dryuers bokes hystoryall
Were large and myghty / and of great prehemynens
Where the sayd kynge reygned by power impervall
This realme to dyscrybe / begyn we shall
At the Cytee of Chester / and the water of Dee
Bytwene Englande and wales / of the west partye

And so transcendynge / by towarde Shrewysbury
By the water of Sabryne / vnto Brystowe

The West see mesureth / the West parte truely
The water of Chamys / the south parte doth she we
flowynge into London / whoso dothe it knowe
The water of Humber was on the north syde
With the water of Mersee / theyr landes to dryde.

Of the foresayd ryuer / and water of Mersee
The kynge of Mercens / taketh his name
As moost sure drydent / to be had in memorye
Mesuryng and metynge / the bondes with great fame
Of Mersee and Northumberlande / kynges of the same
Bitwene cheshyr and lanchyr theyr kyngdomes certayne
As auntyent Cronycles descryben it full playne.

The sayd myghty kyngdome / of Mercens dyd holde
Many noble Cytees / with townes and burghes royall
Whiche Penda optayned / enlarged manyfolde
As Chester / Stafford / Lytchefelde / Couetre memorall
Lyncolne and Huntynghdon / Northampton withall
Leycester and Derby / Cambridge and Dronforde
Worcester and Brystowe / with other mo & Herforde

Many royall ryuers / were conteyned in the same
With sundry kyndes of fylshes / swete and delypous
It were tedpous to she we / of them the dryers name
In ryuers and in pooles / swymmyng full plentuous
Also forestes / parkes / chases large and beauteous
And all beestes of venery / plesaunt for a kynge
To cours at lyberte / befound there pasturyng

Also this royall realme / holdeth as we fynde
Abundaunce of fruytes / plesaunt and profytable

Great plente of cornes / and graynes of euery kynde
With hylles / bales / pastures / comly and delectable
The soyle and glebe / is set plentuous and comendable
In all pleasaunt propertes / no part of all this lande
May be compared / to this foresayd Mercelande.

The people of Mercens / the trouthe yf we dare saye
Lords / barons / knyghtes / with all the comunete
In musture and in batayle / euer the pryce haue they
The kynges grace to serue / moost balyaūt in artylere
In all actes Marcyall / euer hauryng the vycorpe
With herte / mynde and harneys / redy day and nyght
Theyr enemyes to subdue / by power mayne & myght.

If they be well ordred / vnder a sure capytayne
And set to suche busynesse / theyr honour to auance
The triumph they optayne / knowen it is certayne
In Englade and Scotlande / & in the realme of fraunce
Fewe of them haue couñtred / by manhode & baleaunce
Great nombre of enemyes / with knyghthode & polycy
We meane them moost specyall / in the West party.

Many other commodytes / pleasures and propriytes
This sayd realme / holdeth of olde antyquyte
In royalties and lordshippes / landes and lybertes
Honourably dylated / in worthyp and polycy
Flouryng in wysedome / honours and chyualre
Aerpyed by kyng Offa / moost myghty and excellent
Proued in his actes / by playne experyment

This Offa subdued / in hystory as is founde
The kyng of Westsaxons / Northumberlande & Kent

Droue Brytons to wales / out of this lande
And made a depe dytche / for a sure dyuydent
Bytweene Englande and Wales / & to this day presente
Is called dytche Offa / so that no Bryton
On payne of punysshement / shulde entre this regyon.

Kyng Offa translated / as sayth Polycronycon
By myghty power / the see of Canterbury
Unto Lychefelde chyrche / with famous oblacyon
for euer to contynui / confirmed by auctoryte
Also he founded / saynt Albans monasterye
fyrst of deuocyon / to Rome gaue Peter pens
Thus royall somtyme / was the realme of Mercens.

¶ A descrypcyon of the Geanalogie of saynt Werburge
and how she descended of foure kynges of this lande / &
of the royall blode of fraunce.

¶ Regnum Merc. ex pte pris.

This noble prynces / the doughter of Syon
The floure of vertu / and byrgyn glorious
Blessed Saynt Werburge / full of deuocyon
Descended by auncetry / and tytle famous
Of foure myghty kynges / noble and victoripous
Keynynge in this lande / by true successyon
As her lyfe hystoryall / maketh declaracyon.

The yere of our lorde / frome the natyuyte
fyue hundreth. xiiii. and also. iiii. score
Whan Austyn was sende / frome saynt Gregorpe
To conuert this regyon / vnto our sauyoure
The noble kinge Crida / than reigned with honoure

Upon the mercpens / whiche kynge was father
Unto kynge Wybba / and Quadiburge his syster.

This Wybba gate Wenda / kynge of mercpens
Whiche Wenda subdued / fyue kynges of this regyon
Reygnyng thyrty yere / in worthyp and reuerens
Was grauntfather to Werburge / by lynyall successyon
By his quene Kynestwith / had a noble generacyon
Fyue baleant prynces / Wenda and kynge Wulfer /
Kynge Ethelred / saint Marceyl / saint marwalde i fere.

And two holy daughters / blessed and vertuouse
Saynt Keneburge / and saynt Keneswyde the byrgyn
Whiche ladyes were buryed / full memorous
At peturboro we abbay / and now there lye in shryne
The sayd kynge Ethelrede / by sufferaunce deuyne
Had a prynce Cochede / whiche after reygned kynge
That traslated Werburge / the .x. yere of her buryenge.

Saynt Marwalde specyfied / vncle to saint Werburge
By his quene saint Ermeberge a paces daughter of kent
Gate.iii. holy byrgyns / saint myldred & saint mylburge
Saynt Maylgyde the thyde / of vertu equypolent
With a sone Mereum / whiche frome the holy sacramēt
Of baptysm was taken / by myracle expresse
To the blys of heuen / to reygne there endelesse.

The seconde sone of Wenda / we meane kynge Wulfere
A noble balvant prynce / by lynyall dyscent
Reygnyng vpon the Mercpens with royalte & power
Maried saynt Ermenylde / y^e kynges daughter of kent
Where throughe the grace of god omnytpotent

They had fayre yssue / saynt Werburge / saynt Kenrede
Saynt wulfade / saynt Ruffyn / in story as we rede.

¶ Regnum Northunborum /
Ex parte matris.

The secōde realme of whō saynt Werburge dyd descēde
Was of saynt Edwyn / kynge of Northumberlande
Whiche maryed Quadyburge / his ryghtes to defende
Doughter of Tryda / kynge of Merllande
Byt wene them descended / as we vnderstande
Two comly prynces / the fyrst we call Cadfyde
The secōde sone in batayle slayne was named Offyde

Kynge Cadfyde gate Hererc y^e was kynge of Deiram
This Hererc by Beornwyde his quene fayre & fre
Had saynt Hylde the abbesse / saynt Bede sayth y^e same
Lady also foundresse / of the abbay of Wythbye
This sayd kynge Hererc / had another lady
The quene of eest Englade / saynt Herfwith the byght
Mother to saynt Serburge / & thre other ladies byght.

This holy Serburge / full of grace and goodnes
Was maryed to Ercombert / a noble kynge of Kent
Byt wyx them descended / a precyous ryches
The blessyd Ermenpde / humble and pacient
Whiche for her vertue / was maryed full excellent
To Wulfer kynge of Merciens / with great solempryte
And mother was to Werburge / a swete floure of chastite

¶ Regnum Estanglorum /
ex parte matris.

The thyde noble kyngedome / of her parentage
 Was the realme of east England / whylom i great degre
 Cytylus kyng of the same / byctoryous and sage
 Gave Redwald his fyrst sone / a chrysten prynce was he
 This Redwalde had .ii. sones / flouryng in chynalpe
 The fyrst was Kenulherus / a noble man of fame
 The seconde Corpwaldus / called by his name.

This foresayd kyng Cytylus / had a seconde sone
 Called Egnicius / accepted as a martyre
 Whiche sayd Egnicius / by lynyall progressyon
 Had .iii. noble prynces / that worthy euer were
 The fyrst was called Ethelwood / y^r seconde Adelhere
 The thyde was saynt Anna / a kyng moost vertuous
 In batayle slayne bryghtfully / now a martyr glorio⁹

This forsayd kyng Anna / marryed as we rede
 The holy prynces Herefwith / for loue and amyte
 They had a noble yssue / to encrease theyr mede
 The blessed Serburge / saynt Audrey of Elpe
 Saynt Ethelburge the thyd / in Byrges now lyeth she
 Saynt Withburge the .iiii. y^r martyr saynt Jurlwyne
 And Aldulph after kyng / which reigned a lōge tyme.

The lady saynt Serburge / eldest of them all
 A gracypus matrone / enduryng all her lyfe
 Was marryed to Ercombert / y^r kyng of Kent royall
 They brought fourth a progeny / noble to dyscryue
 The blessed Ermenylde / vertuous mayd and wyfe
 Whiche lady was mother / by grace of god almyght
 Unto blessed Werburge / our confort and our lyght.

¶ Regnum Cancie et francie / ex parte matris.

The.iiii. myghti kyngdome / of whom this royal p̄ces
 Saynt Werburge descended / was the realme of kent
 Where reygned fyrst Hengystus / by vycory & prowes
 Whiche was the fourth man / by lygnage eydent
 Procedyng fro Moden / a prynce full prepotent
 Of whom our p̄genytours / Angles / Jutes / & Saxons
 Lypally succeded / kynges of dyuers nacyns.

This foresayd prynce Modē / as dyuers auctours sayne
 Was the .xv. frō Noe / by naturall progressyon
 Of his eldest sone Sem / descendyng playne
 In saxons tongue Geaf / after ryte and custome
 Not of the lygne of Japhet / by theyr oppynon
 Retourne we to Hengyst / and to his successoures
 And speke of theyr royalte / to please the audytoures.

Ermenrycus kyng of kent / reygned with great power
 The yere of our saupoure / fyue hundreth fyue & thyrte
 Unto whome Engystus was great graundfather
 This sayd kyng Ermenryc / had yllue fayr and fre
 A doughter called Ricula / which maried was to fledde
 Of Ester and Aydyller / gouernoure and kyng
 Of whom a myghty kynred / by proces was comyng.

This Ermenryc gate Ethelbyct full vertuous
 Whiche kyng reygned in kent / the yere of our saupour
 fyue hundreth fyue & fyfty / & baptysed was gracpous
 By blessyd bysshop Austyn / of Englade called doctour
 He was fyrst cysten kyng / & pryncypall protectour
 Of the fayth within this lande / and founder was also

Of dyuers holy places / and monasteryes both to w.

This sayd kynge Ethelbryc / for the great habundaunce
Of ryches and honour / was marryed solemply
To the prynces Berta / the kynges doughter of fraunce
And of them proceded a vertuous progeny
Cadburg & Ethelburg saintes / whiche Ethelburg truly
By Edwyne kyng of North / had.iiii. prynces honorable
And.iii. holy doughters / gracyous and commendable.

Also kynge Ethelbryc / had to his successoure
Kynge Cadwalde / in Kent reygnyng a longe space
He marryed lady Emma / of fraunce the chosen floure
And by her had yssue / saynt Engwyde full of grace
Also pryncce Ermenred his seconde sone / whiche wace
Marryed to quene Osaua / of them dyd procede
Two holy martyrs / Ethelbryc and Etheldrede.

This pryncce Ermenred / had.iiii. ladyes bryght
Lyke the.iiii. floodes of Paradyse / thynnyng in vertu
The eldest of the systers / saynt Ermenberge bryght
The seconde saynt Ermenburge / the spouses of Ihesu
The thyrde saynt Adeldryde / all byces dyd subdu
The.iiii. saynt Erme gyde / sayth they lyues hystoryall
Thre of them holy byrgens / the fourth matrone we call

This foresayd Cadwalde / a souerayne myghty kynge
By Emma of fraunce / had to his emberyoure
The noble kynge Erccumbert / full gracyous in luyng
Whiche marryed Serburge / with worshyp & honour
The kynges doughter of eest England specyfied afore
This pryncce loued vertue / prayer and deuocyon
Merburge
b i.

Commaūdyng all his realme / to kepe þe fast of Lenton.

Ercombert. xxi. yere / reynynge in his regaly
Had a noble progeny / in grace and all goodnes
His prynce hyght Egbryct / his seconde sone Lothary
Whiche prynce reygned but ten yere / kynges expresse
Lothary succeeded hym / raynyng. xii. yeres doubtlesse
Also he had two daughters / saynt Ermenylde þe quene
The other hyght saynt Erkenode / a moynes serene.

This lady Ermenylde / was maryed royally
To the aforesayd Gulfer / kynges of Mercens
Bytwene them descended / full graciously
A noble Margaryte / of hye magnificens
A roose of Paradyse / full of prehemynens
Most blessed Werburge / the gemme of holynes
Our synguler suffrage / and sterre of our clerenes.

¶ A descrypcyon of the actes & chivalry of kynges Penda
graundfather to saynt Werburge / & of his noble and
vertuous yssue and progenye. Ca. iiii.

The yere of grace. bi. c. fyre and twenty
The foresayd prynce Penda / began for to reygne
The tenth man fro Woden / a prynce in Saxony
Sone and heyre to Wylbhe / sayth myne auctour playne
Fyfty yeres of aage / that tyme he was certayne
When he was fyrst crowned / kynges of Mercens
Thyrti yeres he reygned / with great reuerens.

Fyue kynges in batayle / this Penda dyd subdue
Saintes Edwyn & Oswald / kynges of Northberlāde

With Sygbert / Egnocius / and Anna full of vertu
Thre noble kynges / regnyng in east Englande
With helpe of Brytones / by Bede we vnderstande
Exylated his regyon / with worschyp and honoures
Muche more than dyd / any of his predeceffoures.

He maryed Keneswith / a lady fayre and bryght
And by her had yssue / a goodly generacyon
Peada his prynce / Culfes a noble knyght
Saynt Ethelred / and Merwalde full of deuocyon
Also saynt Merfellyn / of holy conuersacyon
Saynt Keneburge / also saynt Keneswyde
Auntess to saynt Werburge / upon the fathers syde.

Thre of his chyldren / as we vnderstande
Prynce Peada / Kyneburge / and Ethelrede
He maryed with Oswy / Kyng of Northumberlande
Co.iii. of his yssue / for loue and for mede
Culfes and Merwalde / the story sayth in dede
Were maryed vnto / the royall blode of Kent
To Ermenylde and Domueue / two ladyes excellent.

Soone after by grace / the myddyll parte of Mercens
Under prynce Peada / were baptysed euery chone
Whiche Peada maryed / Elfele with reuerens
Doughter vnto Oswy / kyng of the North regyon
Peada therto graunted / without contradycyon
Under a fre lycence / his people were at lyberte
Within all his regyon / baptysed for to be.

Also prynce Alfryde / sone to kyng Oswy
Maryed saynt Keneburge / syster to prynce Peada
Werburge
b.ii.

Whiche sayd Beda / brought from the north party
foure holy preestes / Ced / Beccy / and Adda
To preche to his people / the fourth was Durna
Whiche.iiii. selden ceased / day / nyght nor tyme
To conuert the people / vnto chrystes doctryne.

Kynge Penda consented / as afore is sayd
And permytted doctours / to preche in euery place
Throughout his realme / and neuer it denayed
Thaptyse his subiectes / by sayth and ghostly grace
He ayded them with socour / and helpe in that case
That wolde be conuerted / for theyr synguler mede
As sayth myne auctour / the venerable Bede.

But by the temptacyon / of our ghostly enemy
This sayd kynge Penda / this vycorpus knyght
Of balpauit men in armure / rayled a great company
And to the North parties went / purposynge to fyght
And cruelly to slee / by power / mayne / and myght
The foresaid kynge Oswy / as he afore had slayne
Sart Oswalde his brother / kynge and martyr playne.

Shortly was forgotten / the fauour of his affynyte
That fully was cōtracte / bytwene these kynges twayne
Joyned at the maryages / of theyr chyldren the
Euer to haue endured / in loue by reason playne
yet Oswy offered Penda / many ryche gyftes certayne
To auoyde his malyce / and for to kepe the peas
Whiche Penda refused / replete with wychednes.

Bytwene these.ii. kynges / was a ströge myghty batell
Not ferre from yorke / ny the flood of Wynwed

In the regyon of Leedes / where by fortune cruell
Kynge Penda perished / a carefully was leed
And .xxx. dukes with hym / were slayne and lesse deed
The kynge Oswy offered gladly / with good entent
His yonge daughter Edelred / to god omnyppotent.

He set her for doctryne / to the abbesse saynt Hilde
Lady of Strenghalt / now called Whytby
And gaue .xii. possessyons / a monastery to buyde
Whiche place is from yorke / myles thyrty
He gaue great landes / to his sone in lawe Deade
But the thyrde yere after / this sayd prynce was slayne
By treason of his wyfe Elsed / for certayne.

¶ How after dethe of Penda & his sone prynce Deada
his seconde sone Ulfer / father to saynt Werburge was
electe to be kynge of all the Mercyens. Ca.b.

After that this Penda / of Mercyens kynge
In batayle by kynge Oswy / cruelly was slayne
And his prynce Deada / after hym thre yeres reygnyng
Was put vnto deth / by his quene in certayne
These people of Mercyens / rebelled sore agayne
The foresayd Oswy / kynge of Northumberlande
And hym refused / as ye shall vnderstande.

All the sayd Mercyens / by a generall counsell
fortyfyed themselfe / with power myght and reason
And crowned prynce Ulfer / as Bede doth vs tell
with honour / worshyp / and great renowne
Whiche prynce to kynge Penda / was the seconde sone
This prynce was preserued / afore tyme secretly
Werburge b.iii.

And saured by his subiectes / frome dethe and malady.

This balyaunt prynce / and redoubted knyght
Kynge Aulfer thus crowned / with great prosperyte
Upon the Mercyens reigned / by tittle and myght
Whiche realme was dyuyded / whylom in partes thre
Ffirst in the West marches / & in the South parte truely
The thyrde parte was nomynate / mydle Englonde
Duer them all thre / he reigned as is fonde.

This sayd kynge Aulfer / in honour famous
Was deuoutely baptysed / with great solempnyte
By two holy bysshops / the blessed Finanys
And bysshop Terumannus / saythe the bystorie
The kynge made a bowe / of hys auctoryte
All temples of ydols / within his regyon
To destroy and chaunge / vnto chrysten relygyon.

This Aulfer was polytyke / replete with wysdom
Victoryous in batayle / proued by his chyualry
His enemyes oppressed / by manhode and reason
Subdued his aduersaryes / and had the victory
From his realme expelled / all cruell tyranny
Conquered in batayle / at Ashdun ryght famous
The kynge of West Saxons / called Kenwalcus.

Also he subdued / vnto his Empyre
The Ilande Aecta / called the yle of wyght
And after that he had / of it his desyre
He gaue the sayd yle / by tittle full ryght
To the kynge of east Englonde / to enlarge his myght
Under that condycyon / that he baptysed wolde be.

And was his godfather / of pure charyte

In lyke wyse as this prouynce / of Mercerys
Wylm was greatest realme / within Englande
Many yeres contynuyng / in mehemynēs
Ryght so the spyrytualte / well knowen and founde
How fyue bysshop sees / within this sayd Mercelande
As at Chester / at Lychfelde / also at Worcester
The fourth at Lyncolne / the fyfth at Dorchester.

Forthermore after dethe / of Jerumannus
Bysshop of Lychfelde / Aulfer the sayd kyng
Desyred the archebysshop / and prymate Theodorus
To graunt them a bysshop / of holy lyuynge
To gouerne the people / by spyrytuall techynge
To shewe to his subiectes / the ensample of vertu
And to preche and teche / the sayth of Chryst Ihesu.

This holy archebysshop / and prymate Theodorus
Desyred saynt Cedda / of the kyng Oswy
For his perfeccyon / and lyuynge vertuous
To be remoewed / to the prouyce of Mercy
Kyng Aulfer was gladde / of his comynge truly
Ryght so were all / the people of his realme
Thankynge therfore / the kyng of Jerusalem.

Kyng Aulfer graunted / to saynt Cedda the cōfessoure
Chan bysshop of Lychfelde / moche possessyon
To edify chyrches / vnto chrystes honoure
But namely he gaue a certayne mansyon
In the prouynce of Lyndesey / ny vnto Lyncolne
Suffreynt to suffyle / and well for to content

Fyfte seruauntes / of good relygious obedyent.

This noble sayd prynce / and redoubted souerayne
flouryng in manheed / wysedome and polycy
Excelled the peres / of this realme certayne
In person / fortitude / and proued chyualry
Lyberall to his seruauntes / gentyll in company
Gracyous to the poore / and a sure protectour
A founder of chyches / and a good benefactour.

A lytell descrypcyon of the noble maryage bytwene
Kynge Aulfer & saynt Ermenylde y^e kynges doughter
of Kent / & of the solēpryde done at y^e same season. Ca. vi.

In meane whyle the kyng / mynded maryage
By the sufferaunce of our lorde god omnyppotent
Issue to encrease / acordyng to his lygnage
After hym to succede / kyng and presydent
He mynded moost / the kynges doughter of Kent
Prynces Ermenylde / nomynate she was
A beautefull creature / replete with great grace.

Certaynly her father / was called Ercomberte
As afore is specyfyed / the kyng of Kent
Her mother Serburge / humble in her herte
Of whome Ermenylde / a lady excellent
Lynally descended / by tytle full auncyent
Her graundfather / Eobalde kyng Ethelhyrces sone
The fyrst crysten prynce / of Saxons nacyon.

Of foure myghty kyngdomes / she is descended
From the royall blode of fraunce / also of Kent

Upon her fathers party / as afore is notyfyed
And on her mothers syde / by lyne auncyent
Frome the east Englande / famous and excellent
Also of Northumberlande / flouryng in honour
Conuerted and baptyfed / vnto our sauyour.

This sayd Ermenylde / this floure of vertue
Was euer dysposed / from her natyurte
Vnto the dyscyplne / of our lorde Ihesu
Enspyrred with his grace / and benygnyte
Refused this worlde / ryches and baryte
He bled the maners / of sadde dyspolycyon
Passyng fragyll youth / and naturall reason.

Suche synguler confort / of vertuous doctryne
In her so dyd water / a pure perfyte plante
Whiche dayly encreased / by sufferauce deupne
Merueylously growyng / in her freshe and barnaunt
With dyuers propytes / of grace exuberant
As sobynges / dyscrecyon / and mekenesse bygynall
Obedyence / graunte / and wysedome naturall.

Euery tree or plante / is proued euident
Whether good or euyl / by experyence full sure
By the budde and fruyte / and pleasaunt descent
A swete tree byngeth forth / by cours of nature
Swete fruyte and delycious / in tast and herdure
Ryght so Ercombert / by his quene moost mylde
Brought graciously forth / the swete Ermenylde.

She folowed her father / in worshyp and honour
As her mother Serburge / the toke imytacyon
Merburge c.i.

To lyue in clennes / presentynge in behauiour
Her father in power / her mother in relygion
Humble in herte / hauryng compassyon
Pyteous and lyberall / where was necessyte
Joyfull to obserue / the dedes of charyte.

Forther of her lyfe / to make declaracyon
As the true legende playnly dothe expresse
Consyder the hystory / with good inspeccyon
Of blessed Serburge / that noble pryncesse
The sayd conuersacyon / and ghostly swetenesse
That is perceyued / in her holy mother
The same perfeccyon / was in the other.

Neuerthelesse Ermenylde / escape ne myght
Worldely honours / and secular dygnyte
As requyred to noble a state of ryght
Ryches / possessyon / namely her beaute
But vnto maryage / compelled was she
Of her parentes / contrary to her entent
To whome she was founde / euer obedyent.

This noble lady / by deuyne prouydens
Elected to her / a spouse commendable
A balpauit prync / the kynges sone of Aercyens
Called kyng Gulfer / famous and honorable
Reygnyng in Aercelande / with ioy incomparable
Excellynge many other / prynces of this regyon
In ryches / retynu / fortune / honour / and wysdome

At this maryage / was moche solempnyte
Her father Ercomberte / and her frendes all

The pynces her uncles / Egbyct and Lothary
The kyng of east Englande / Aldulph in speccall
Dukes / erles / barons / and knyghtes in generall
Whiche sayd company / were redy that same day
To worshyp the matrymony / in theyr beest aray.

This royall maryage / was solempnysed
With synguler pleasures / ryches and royalte
Theyr frendes colyns / redy on euery syde
To do theyr deuoyre / and shewe humanyte
Nothyng wantynge / euery thyng was plente
Of delycate metes / and myghty wyues stronge
With mynstrels / melody / and myrthes amonge.

When this fayre pynces / resplendent in vertue
Came vnto Mercelande / in the order of matrymony
Than grace with good gouernaunce / dyd byrre subdue
Vertue was maystres / chiefe ruler and lady
The faythe of holy chyrche / dyd growe and multiply
Kelyggon encreased / honour and prosperye
In euery place pacyence / true loue and charyte.

At the solemne spousage / of this lady bryght
Kynge Aulfer promysed / on his fydelite
Errours to correcke / by his wysdome and myght
Clere to expell / all sectes of ydolatre
Frome his realme / and fulfill by his auctoryte
The promysse truly made / at the fonte of baptyme
The chyrche to conferue / and saue it from ruyne.

The myghty realme of Mercens / also of Kent
That season were brought / bothe vnto nyte
Werburge c.ii.

And as one kyngedome / ruled full excellent
They subiectes and seruauntes / in tranquillite
Kyng Aulfer by his quene / had a noble progenye
Aulfade and Ruffyn / with pryncce Kenrede
And Werburge / of whome we purpose to procede.

¶ A breue declaracyon of the holy lyfe and conuersacy-
on of saynt Werburge / bled in her tender youthe / aboue
the comyn cours of nature. Ca.bii.

This blessed lady / and royall prynces
Descendynge of noble / and hye parentage
Was doughter to Aulfer / the legende dothe rehers
Kyng of Mercelande / and of famous lynage
Her mother Ermenylde / ioynd to hym in maryage
They dwelled somtyme / a lytell frome Stone
At a place in Staffordeshyre / amyddes his regyon.

They had bytweene them / other chyldren thre
Aulfade and Ruffyn / martyrs full glorpyous
Synt Kenrede his pryncce / of greate auctoryte
Cumylate at Rome / a confessor gracyous
The lyues of these thre / we wyll not now dyscus
But speke of the ghostly / and meke conuersacyon
Of blessed Werburge / now at this season.

for as declareth / the true Passyonary
A boke wherin / her holy lyfe wyten is
Whiche boke remaineth / in Chester monastery
I purpose by helpe / of Ihesu kyng of blys
In any wyse to reherse / any sentence amys

But folowe the legende / and true hyffory
After an humble ffyle / and from it fytell vary.

This blessed Werburge / from her natyryte
ffolowyng the counfeyll / of her noble parentes
Dyfpofed her felfe / euer to humylyte
Obedyent to them / with all reuerens
Loth to dyfpleafe / or make any offens
Or dyfquyet any reasonable creature
Thus was her maner / in youthe be ye fure.

Sadde and demure / of her countenaunce
Stable in geffure / proued in euery place
Sobre of her wordes / all bertu to auauunce
Humble / meke / and mylde / replete with grace
Many vertuous maners / in her founde there was
And dyuers gyfftes naturall / to her appropriate
As was conuenient / for fo noble a ffate.

And as fhe encreafed / moore and moze in age
A newe plant of goodnes / in her dayly dyd fpryng
Great grace and vertue / were fet in her ymage
Wherof her father / had moche merbeylyng
Her mother mused / of this ghoffly thyng
To behold fo yonge / and tender a may
ffrom bertu to bertu / to procede euery day.

No merueyll it is / who fo taketh hede
In naturall thynges / the dyuers operacyon
Dothe not a rofall rofe / from a here procede
Paffyng the fflocke / with pleafant dylectacyon
The ffweete ryuer paffeth / by due probacyon
Werburge c.iii.

His heed and fountayne / ryght so dothe she
Transcende her parentes / with great benygnte.

And tho her bretherne / delyted for to here
For theyr soule helthe / ghostly exortacyon
yet she them passed / manyfolde more clere
In loue of our lorde / and meke conuersacyon
And lyke as Phebus / in his heuently regyon
Passed other stretes / shynynge moost pure
So dothe this byrgyn / aboute the cours of nature.

Lordes / dukes / barons / within the kynges hall
Aerueyled on her maners / and constaunte sobrynes
The plente of wysedome / and dyscrecyon withall
In so tender age / they neuer knewe expresse
Her mynde so perfyte / auoydynge all ylnes
But they knewe well / it pretended by all reasone
Synguler grace and goodnes / to her comynge soone.

Affyrmynge on this wyse / yf she wolde contynu
With suche vertuous maner / in yeres of hye dyscrecyon
That she sholde do honour / by the grace of Ihesu
Unto all her kynrede / and synguler consolacyon
An ensample of vertu / and humylyacyon
Theyr conforte / theyr trefure / and sterre full bryght
And chefe lumynary / shynynge day and nyght.

Fyrst in the mornynge / to chyrche she wolde go
Folowynge her mother / the quene euery day
With her boke and bedes / and departe not them fro
Here all deupne seruyce / and her deuocions lay
And to our blessed sauour / mekely on knees pray

Dayly hym despyrre / for his endeles grace and pyte
To kepe her frome synne / and preserue her in chastyte.

Where youthe is dysposed / of naturall mocyon
To dysportes and pleasures / full of banyte
This mayde was euer / of sadde dysposycyon
Constaunt and dyscrete / still and womanle
Gladde in her soule / to here speke of chastyte
Clennes and sobrenes / and ioyfull for to here
Ghostly exortacyons / to her herte moost dere.

¶ How this yonge byrgyn saynt Werburge was despy-
red of dukes & erles in maryage / and of the answere she
gaue to the / in auoydeng worldly pleasures. Ca.viii.

As tender youthe passed / this blessed maydyn
Dayly encreased / more and more in vertue
In ghostly science / and vertuous dyscyplyne
Oblerynge the doctryne / of our lorde Ihesu
Had his commaundementes / in her herte full tru
So that no creature / more perfyte myght be
In vertuous gyftes (by grace) than she.

She was replete / with gyftes naturall
Her bylage moost pleasaunt / fayre and ampyable
Her goodly eyes / clerer than the crystill
Her countenaunce comly / swete and commendable
Her herte lyberall / her gesture sauourable
She lytell consyderynge / these gyftes transytory
Set her selyf / in chryst perpetually

She hadde moche worthyp / welthe / and ryches
Werburge c.iiii.

Measures / honoures / reuerence and royalte
The ryches she dysposed / with great mekenesse
To the poore people / with great charyte
But her sadnes / constaunce / and humylte
Vertue / gentylnes / so pacyent and colde
Transcended all these other / a thousande folde.

The vertuous maners / and excellent fame
Of this holy byrgyn / redoubted so ferre
In all this regyon / in praylynge her name
That the nobles of this lande / wolde not dysferre
But with ryche apparell / and myghty power
Came for to seke her / lyke as to Salomon
Quene Saba approached / to here of his wysedome.

So lyke wyse some came / to her of her vertue
Some of her sadnesse / and prudent dyscrecyon
Some for her constaunce / so stable and true
Some of her chastyte / and prenaunt reason
Some for her beaute / and famous wysdome
And some that were boine / of kynges lygnage
Desyred yf they myght / haue her in maryage.

In beaute amiable / she was equall to Rachell
Comparable to Sara / in fyne fidelyte
In sadnes and wysedom / lyke to Abygaell
Replete as Delbora / with grace of prophcy
Equyualent to Ruth / she was in humylte
In pulchrytude Rebecca / lyke Hester in solynesse
Lyke Iudyth in vertue / and proued holynesse.

The prynce of Westsaxons / a pere of this lande

Wyllynge to haue her by way of maryage
With humble reuerence / as we vnderstande
Sayd to her these wordes / wysely and sage
O souerayne lady / borne of hye lynage
O beautefull creature / and imperyll prynces
This is my full mynde / that I now rehers.

From my fathers realme / hyder I am come
Unto our presence / yf ye be so content
With worshyp and honour / and moche renowne
In all honest maner / aperyng euydent
My mynde is on you set / with loue feruent
To haue you in maryage / all other to forsake
If it be your pleasure / thus me for to take.

ye shalbe asured / a quene for to be
ye shall haue ryches / worshyp / and honour
Royall ryche appareyll / and eke the sufferaynte
Precyous stones in golde / worthy a kynges tresour
Landes / rentes / and lybertees / all at your pleasur
Seruauntes euery houre / your byddynge for to do
With ladies in your chambre / to wayte on you also.

With these kynde wordes / the byrgyn abasshed sore
And with mylde countenaunce / answered hym agayne
The playnes of her mynde / to rest for euermore
Sayenge : o noble prynce / I thanke you now certayne
for youre gentyll offer / shewed to me so playne
ye be well worthy / for your regalyte
To haue a better maryage / an hundreth folde than me.

But now I shewe you / playnly my true mynde

My purpose was neuer / maryed for to be
A lord I haue chosen / redemer of mankynde
Jhesu the seconde persone in trynityte
To be my spouse / to Whome my byrgynyte
I haue depely bowed / enduryng all my lyfe
His seruaunt to be / true spouses and wyfe.

Therefore noble prynce / hertfully I you pray
Tempte me no farther / after suche condycyon
Whiche am so stedfast / and wyll be nyght and day
Neuer for to chaunge / nor make alteracyon
Take ye this answer / for a sure conclusyon
The promyse I haue made / and bowe of chastyte
Enduryng my lyfe / shall neuer broken be.

Dyuers other astatys / came her for to assaile
Made instaunt requestes / vnto this byrgyn fre
For all theyr busynesse / they myght not preuaile
So constaunt fyme & stable / in herte & mynde was she
A mountayne or hyll / soner leue ye me
Myght be remooued / agaynst the course of nature
Than she for to graunte / to suche worldly pleasure.

She well consydered / the texte of holy scrypture
Who byleueth her chast / for the loue of Jhesu
The temple of god / they be clypped sure
And shalbe rewarded / for that noble vertu
An hundredth folde (by grace) byces to subdu
And heuen for to haue / at theyr departyng
Whiche she remembred wysely / aboue all thyng.

¶ How y^e false Werhode desired kynge Aulser to haue

Merburge his daughter in maryage. And how y^r kynge
graunted therto. Ca. ix.

As afore is sayd / whan Penda the kynge
By saynt Oswy kynge / at Leedes was slayne
And Aulfer his sone / the fourth yere folowynge
Was baptysed and crowned / By bysshop synane
A solempne boue he made / saythfull and certayne
All temples of ydolles / in his realme to destroy
And chaunge them to chyches / and newe edify.

The same he promysed / as he was true knyght
Whan that he marped / blessed Ermenylde
Dredynge sore the iustyce / of god almyght
For his fathers demerytes / unreconsyled
On hym to fall sodenly / and so he beggled
Promysynge amendes / at his conuersyon
Unto holy chyche / with humble deuocyon.

Whiche kynge Aulfer / as was the more pyte
By the wycked counseyll / of a fals knyght
Called Merbode / ranne soone in apostasy
For a lytell whyle / wantynge perfyte lyght
The bryghtnes of the day / was tourned to nyght
Whan he gaue credence / that creature vnto
Prolongynge the actes / he promysed to do.

Under kynge Aulfer / chefe stewarde of his hall
Was this false Merbode / ruler of euery porte
Whome the lady Venus / brought vnto thall
Perled and wounded / so greuouly his harte
Enflammed with loue / and with her fyry darte

Plonget with sorowe / syghynge day and nyght
The beaute of Werburge / moeued so his syght.

The blynde goddes Cupyde / bered so sore his mynde
With interyor loue / and sensuall desyre
Of worldely affectyon / that reste coude he none fynde
His spyryte was troubled / he brenned as dothe the fyre
Upon this holy byrgyn / his loue was so entyre
To haue her in maryage / was all his intent
That euery houre was a moneth / after his iudgement.

Prouyded in his mynde / how that he well myght
Enforce hym wysely / with boldynesse and polycye
To shewe his full entent / in maner good and ryght
No dyspleasure taken / vpon his lordes partye
By this ymagynacyon / he fell vpon his knee
Afore his lorde and kyng / desyrynge a petycyon
His mynde to declare / with fully grace of pardon.

Excellent prynce he sayd / and moost worthy kyng
That reygnes now within the realme of Englande
Flourynge in chualry / in honour encreasyng
Trāscendynge other prynces / of this forsayd lande
My full intencion / now ye shall vnderstande
Requyrynge your grace / in this poore cýrcumstaunce
At my petycyon / to take no greuaunce.

My synghuler good lorde / hertfully I you pray
With instaunte request / and humble supplicacyon
Graunte me your daughter Werburge / as ye maye
To haue her in maryage / auoydynge all treason
If your grace deny / this present petycyon

Sethe me behoues / full soone and hastely
My loue is so feruent / there is no remedy.

Stande by Werbode / kynge Gulfer than sayd
Our chyfe champpon / in all our chyualry
your humble desyre / shall not be denyd
Of Werburge our doughter / now consent wyll we
If ye may optayne / her wyll and mynde truele
Her mothers also / vnder that condycyon
We graunt her to you / at your meke suggestyon.

Of this gracyous answere / a gladde man he was
Reioysyng in his herte / began to conspyre
Castyng in his mynde / craftely by compas
How he myght optayne / to the hys empyre
And reggne after Gulfer / at his owne desyre
But the man prepose / god dysposed all
Who clymbeth to hys / often hath a fall.

¶ How the quene saynt Ermenylde wolde not cōsente
therto / & how her betherne saynt Wulfade and Ruffyn
were agaynst the sayd maryage. Ca. x.

Of this busynesse / whan the quene had knowlege
Namely of Werbode / the greuous presumpcyon
How he had moeued / thought his wyched rage
The kynge in suche causes / by synfuler petycyon
And how the kynge consented / to his supplicacyon
She was sore greued / at this proude crafty knyght
Called hym in presence / and sayd these wordes ryght.

Thou wyched tyrant / and unkynde creature

folowynge thyne appetyte / and sensualyte
Thou cruell pagane / presumynge at thy pleasure
Bynded with ygnorauce / and infydelyte
Who gaue the lycence / and suche auctoryte
Our doughter Clerburge / to desyre of the kyng
Without our counseyll / therto consentynge.

Consyder ryght well / thy kynred and pedegre
It is well knowen / thou arte comen of nought
Nothor of duke / erle / lorde / by auncetre
But of bylayne people / yf it be well sought
Agaynst our honour / now that thou hase wrought
Whiche consequently / shall be to thy payne
For all thy labour / is spende in bayne.

Thou knowes of a certayne / refused the hase
Many a ryche maryage / within this londe
A thousande tymes better / than euer thou wase
Is now or els shalbe / by any maner sonde
Our doughter to the / shall neuer be bonde
Nor suche a captyfe / shall haue no powere
With kynges blode royall / to approche it nere.

Under my souerayne lorde / and me also
An offycer thou arte / and of great royalte
To be a true seruaunte / now thou arte our foo
Tried / proued / founde fals / in eche degre
Thou hase well deserued / to be hanged on a tre
For thy mysdede / thou shall soone repent
Thy hye presumpcyon / proude and dyslobedpent.

As for our doughter / and dere derlyng

By the grace of god / and our aduysment
Soone shalbe marped / to the moost myghty kyng
That euer was borne / and in this erth lent
We meane our sauyour / lorde omnyotent
Wherefore thy wretchydnes / wyll vpon the lyght
Thou taynted traytour / out of our lyght.

With that saynt Werburge / came into presence
Afore her mother / and all the company
Doyng her duty / with all due reuerenc
Folowynge her doctryne / full sappyntly
With lycence obtayned / spake euidently
After suche maner / that all the audyence
Reioyced to here / her lusty eloquence

O souerayne lady / and kynges doughter dere
My dere mother / ouer all thyng transytory
O gracyous prynces / and quene to kynge Gylfere
To your ghosly counseyll / do me euer apply
As I haue promysed / ryght euidently
To the kyng of kynges / and lorde celestyall
I wyll obseue / enduryng this lyfe mortall.

And thou false Werhode / folowynge sensuallite
I meruayle greatly / thy hye presumpcyon
To moeue our father / with suche audacyte
Knowynge my mynde / set on relyggyon
yet for thy soule helthe / accepte this lesson
Aske mercy and grace / of my spouse eternall
Lest benegaunce sodeynly / vpon the do fall.

Wherwith her bretherne / Gylfade and Ruffyn

Two noble prynces / manfull sadde and wyse
Sore bered with payne / they hertes were within
At this false stewart / whiche can so deuryse
Agayne they honour / to do suche preiudyse
As to attempte they father the kynge
In so great a mater / they not consentynge.

They called Werrebode / afore them all
Sayenge thou caytife / who gaue the lycence
To moeue this cause / to hy and specyall
Touchynge a lady / of suche prehemynence
A kynges daughter / of moche magnifysence
None comparable to hym / in all this regyon
In honour / royalte / power / and dyscrecyon.

And as our mother sayd / to the bysorne
Like well thy progeny / and all thy lynage
A byllayne orels wers / sothly / thou was borne
Now our dere syster / wolde haue in maryage
As semynge for a prynce / of hye parentage
Than for suche a carle / by a prouerbe auncient
A lad to wedde a lady / is an inconuenient.

Therefore we charge the / bpon greuous payne
Make no suche mater / nor speke of it no more
For yf suche mocyon / come to vs agayne
Of hye presumpcyon / as is done afore
Thou shalt repent / the cause and dede full sore
Now we commaunde the / no forther to contriue
But cease of suche busynesse / in payne of thy lyue.

¶ How the false Werrebode complayned bpon Aulfade

and fullyn to kynge Aulfare by malyce and enuy / and
was the cause of theyr dethe. Ca.ri.

This wycked Werrebode / the bedyll of Belpall
The minister of myschef / & sergeant of sathanas
Consyderynge he was / despyssed of them all
And sore rebuked / for his outragious trespass
He brenned in enuy / as a man without grace
Cast in his mynde / how he myght woken be
Upon her bretherne / by some subtylte.

Euer from that tyme / he lay in wayte
Seking occasyons / on them to complayne
Dailly ymagyned / with subtyll deceyte
Them to subdue / and cause to be slayne
Attendynge oportunitie / to take them in a trayne
By the false entylement / of his mayster Belpall
Prompte to all myschefe / as dysciple naturall.

In fauour of his prynce / by crasse he hym brought
(As now is in custome) with false flattery
Some please theyr mayster / and that is ryght nought
So dyd this Werrebode / by subtyll polycy
His bengeable mynde / was hymselfe to magnify
And utterly to lose / these prynces twayne
Or destroye hymselfe / by mysfortune playne.

Lyke as Archythofell / chiefe counsellour to absalon
Sundry tymes moeued hym / into baryaunce
And with kynge Asuerus / in fauour was Amon
Counseylynge hym euer / into great myschaunce
In lyke cause Werrebode / moeued to bengeaunce
Werburge. d.i.

Was chefe counſeler / to Auſter the kyng
Whiche brought hym ſelfe to ſhame / and euyl endynge.

The elder prynce Auſade / in his dyſporte
Uſed haukyng / huntynge / for a paſt tyme
But into huntynge namely / was his reſorte
Euery day in the morowe / longe afore pryme
And as it fortunèd / vpon a tyme
A myghty harte reyled was / courſed a longe ſpace
Whome Auſade purſued / with pleaſure and ſolace.

This harte ſore ſtrayned / ranne for his ſocour
As all deer done / of theyr proppyte
To a well with water / after his great labour
Hym to reconforte / and the more freſher be
Wherby ſaynt Cead / had his oratorye
The wyld harte there lay / full ſecrete and ſtyll
And ſuffered this holy man / to do all his wyll.

This bleſſed byſſhop moeued with pyte
Couered this ſayd harte / with bowes and leues alſo
Put a ſmall corde / aboute his necke trule
And after commaunded hym ſpedly to go
To the wyld woodes / whens he came fro
His paſture to ſeke / for ſaynt Cead knewe truly
It was a ſygne ſolowynge / of ſome great myſtery.

(As Bede wytnelleth) this holy confeſſour
Was byſſhop of Lychefelde / and Couentre
Whiche for the loue of our ſauour
In wylderneſſe dwelled / all ſolytarpe
Contented with fruytes / of the wyld tree

With rootes / herbes / water / for his sustentacyon
Enduryng peinaunce / with due contemplacyon.

This venerable pryncce / ensuyng this great harte
Approched to his cell / with great dylgencce
Tenderly requyrng / where and in what parte
This harte escaped / so ferre out of presence
This holy man answered / with all reuerence
Beestes / bydes / fowles / I kepe none at all
But I knowe the instructour / of thy helthe eternall.

By this brute beest / thou shall perceyue well
The sacramentes of holy chyrche euerychone
To encrese thy byleue / by our ghostly counsell
And so to be baptyled / and haue remysyon
By dyuers brute beestes / for mannes saluacyon
Our lord hath shewed / secretes mystyccall
To his electe persones / by grace supernall.

To Noe came conforte / after the great deluge
By a doue / byngng a braunche of Olyue
To the prophet Hely / a rauens dyd refuge
Brought hym his sustenaunce / and saued his lyue
Unto saynt Eustach / full memoratyue
Our lord appered / in a hartes lykenes
To whome he obeyed / gladly with mekenes.

Of whiche examples / pryncce Aulfade gladd was
Thankyng god and saynt Cead / that he thyder come
And sayd holy father / fulfilled with grace
If ye can supply / my instaunte petycyon
That the sayd harte / myght retourne hyder soone
Werburge. d.ii.

Whiche is now in wyldernesse / vnto our presence
Than to your doctryne / I wyll gyue fully credence.

Saynt Cead vnto prayer / deuoutely went
And the wyld harte / frome the wood came hastely
With the corde in his necke / apperynge euident
And in theyr presence / stode full ryght soberly
Maye sone than he sayd / byleue than stedfastly
Understande ye may / all thyng possible is
To a faythfull persone / that pertytely byleuys.

Gulfade confortd / and in the fayth probate
Fell downe to his fete / with humble deuocyon
Despyng baptym / to be regenerate
Vnto our sauour / for his soules saluacyon
Saynt Cead blessed / the well that season
And baptysed this prynce / in name of the trynitye
Was preest and godfather / for want of compayne.

This chrysten prynce / taryed with hym all nyght
In fastyng / prayer / and medytacyon
And was refresthed / naturally in syght
With bodyly and ghostly sustentacyon
The next day receyued / the holy comunyon
With lycence departed / to his father agayne
The harte to the forest / recourfed certayne.

The thyrde day after / his brother Ruffyn
Followynge the same harte / by deuyn prouydence
Was well instructed / in ghostly doctryne
Baptysed by saynt Cead / & communed with reuerence
And as it fortunyd / by playne experyence

Of all the proces done / to the elder brother
All thynges dyd happe / ryght so to the other.

Afore this season / chrystes sayth moost gracyous
Thugh this lande / was preched in euey place
By bysshop Jynane / and Jerumannus
Whiche Jeruman of east Englande / fyrst byslop was
And with saynt Ermenylde / came hyder by grace
yet fully conuerted / was not afterlee regyon
Clene frome ydolatry / vnto this season.

These forsayd prynces / conuerted newly
By blessed Ceas / to chrysten relygion
Dayly to hym resorted / for counseyll ghostly
To encrease in vertue / and holy perfeccyon
With lycence pretended / they wolde togyder come
Vnto his oratory / from the kynges hall
Under colour of Huntynge / as they dyd it call.

And as it is wyrtten / in holy scrypture
Whoso is a sure frende / loueth stedfastly
And who is enemy / putteth dyligent cure
Ayschese to accomplishe / moost sturdiuously
The false Werewode suspectynge / euidently
The newe conuersyon / of these prynces twayne
Prepared hym craftely / to take them in a trayne.

He watched on them / secretly euery day
To knowe theyr resorte / and vnto what place
Lyke as a hounde folowynge / these prynces to bytray
Or a dogge dothe a dere / by sent of the chas
Whan he had perceyued / how all thynges was.

He compased in mynde / by false inuencion
To complayne to the kynge / for theyr destruccyon.

My synguler goode lorde / and moost pryncypall
Sayd this Murtherode / the fals traytour
Pleaseth your goodnes / and grace specyall
To my supplicacyon / to be a protectour
Ye haue two prynces / myghty in honour
Whiche are my lordes / and euer shalbe
If they wolde be true / to your soueraynte

They haue refused / the more pyte is
your auncyent lawes / and sectes euerychone
And with your lycence / haue done yet more amys
For now they be subiecte / to a newe relygion
Utterly refusynge / your decrees and olde custome
Folowynge the counseyll / and mynde of a sennor
Called byll hopye Cead / theyr specyall auctor.

your strayte commaundementes / they dayly despyce
And purpose I tell you / in secretenes
Unto your persone / to do moche preiudyce
To murther or poyson you / shortly doubtles
And so for to reygne / and gouerne your ryches
Bytwene them twayne / to dvyde your lande
By fals conspyracy / as ye shall vnderstande.

With these false tales / and many other mo
The kynge was moeued / to malyce and yre
By his compleccyon / as he was wont to do
More cruell than a beest / as feruent as the fyre
Depely assyrmynge / that dethe shulde be theyr hyre

If he myght take them / in any place
They shulde be slayne / and suffer withouten grace.

In the morowe after / whan Phebus began to clere
The kynge toke Merbode / with hym secretly
To try out the truthe / and how it wolde appere
Whether his prynces / were gone to the oratory
If it were so / he sende hym pryuely
To gyue them knowlege / of his entent
For to remooue / from his hasty Judgment.

The father had pyte / vpon his chyldren naturall
Wolde not haue slayne them / the sothe to say
Wherefore he sende / the seruaunt of Belyall
To conuay them fro thens / some other way
The kynge knewe hymselfe / not able that day
To refrayne his ire / and cruell hastynesse
Gyuen to hym of nature / in suche great dystresse.

This wyched Merbode / came to the oratory
And sawe these prynces / in great deuocyon
Counceyled his message / by malice and enuy
Retourned to the kynge / hastily and soone
Newly complaynyng / by fals ymagynacyon
A hundreth folde worse / than at the fyrst tyme
With new addycyons / to brynge them to ruyne.

And whan the kynge / approached nigh the cell
Herynge the complayntes / of this fals knyght
The chyldren perceyued / a voyce ryght well
Cesled of theyr prayers / and came forth full ryght
On whome whan Aulfere / had ones a syght

He was sore moeued / as hote as the fyre
Agaynst her chyldren / that loued hym entyre.

But by the malyce / and wyched temptacyon
Of the deuyl / mannes olde mortall enemy
And what by the false crafty suggestyon
Of Wyched Werrebode / fulfilled with enuy
And by his owne hastynesse / and cruell fury
These prynces were slayne / Talsade and Ruffyn
Now glorious martyrs / repprynge in heuyn.

After whan kynge Gulfer / approached his castell
And bnneth was entred / into his hall
Incontynently a spyryte / the falsse fende of hell
Entred fals Werrebode / after the people all
Inwardly hym bered / with peynes contynual
That his armes and handes / he dyd horrybly tere
Whiche todayne benegaunce / all the courte dyd fere.

He rored and yelled / lyke a wylde bull
Shewed all the myschefe / malyce and enuy
Done agaynst the martyrs / with a mynde yrefull
So sore constrayned / with peynes greuously
The deuyl ceased not / his dolours to multiply
Tyll his fylthy soule / compelled sore was
For to expyre / for his hydeous trespas.

¶ How kynge Gulfer was conuerted a toke great re-
pentaunce for his offences. And by the counseyll of saynt
Ceade was a deuoute man / and a good benefactour to
holy chyche / and a founder of dyuers holy places rely-
gyous.

Ca. xii.

Than Gulfer consyderynge / with due dyscrecyon
His cruell hastynes / and surpous mynde
How ferre he had / abused his reason
Agaynst his chyldren / by nature and kynde
He sore repented / in hystory as we fynde
His greuous trespas / and homycyde bnnaturall
In conscyence greued / for his synnes mortall.

Hamely lamentynge / in soule his apostasy
After his baptyme / and ghostly conuersyon
And for the departure / of his prynces truly
Contrary to ryght / kynde and all reason
The losse of his fame / thugh this regyon
A dethe to his quene / and his louers all
Greuous to his kynnesmen / and frendes naturall.

All these consydered / with due cyncumstaunce
He wayled and weped / sobbynge full sore
Plonged in sorowe / heuynes / and greuaunce
Lamentynge his offence / a thousande tymes therfore
His intollerable peyne / encreased more and more
Wofully he went / to his bed by and by
Supposynge some dethe / withouten any remedy.

Some of his louers / beyng there present
Gaue hym thei counseyll / to hunte in the forest
Some to dysportes / and pleasures euydent
Some vnto melody / all thoughtes to degest
But Ermenylde his quene / whiche loued hym best
Counseyled hym truly / to take contrycyon
And mendes make / by due satysfaccyon.

Merburge.

e.i.

Of this ghosly counseyll / the kynge was very glad
And in the morowe after / prepared besyly
With mekenesse to seke / blessed saynt Cead
So whan the kynge came / to his oratory
The bysshop was at masse / and ryght consequently
fro heuen descended / so glorious a lyght
That of the mystery / Culfer had no syght.

Whan masse was ended / saynt Cead his bestures caste
Upon the sonne beame / by myracle there hangynge
Supposynge on a forme / and made moche haste
To mete at the doore / mekely the sayd kynge
Whiche laye there prostrate / penaunce desyringe
With reuerence hym eleuate / and gaue an exortacyon
The kynge was agreable / for to do satisfaccyon.

The bysshop hym enioyned / in parte of penaunce
To destroye all ydolles / and sectes of ydolatry
In all his realme / and the temples of paganes
To translate to the honour / of god almyghty
With preestes and clerkes / to pray and synge deuoutly
Also peas and iustyce / to be kepte contynuall
With the werkes of mercy / to be vsed in specyall.

Forther he enioyned hym / of his charyte
Monasteryes to make / of great perfeccyon
Endowed with landes / possessed in lyberte
Therin for to set / men of relygyon
To pray to our lord / for his saluacyon
Whiche Culfer promysed / to fulfill gladle
As soone as he myght / by possybyltye.

Then the foresayd kynge / and the holy confessor
Went to theyr prayers / in the oratory
And as the kynge looked up / to our sauour
The sayd sacrat bestures / he sawe euidently
Hangynge on the sonne beame / full merueylously
His gloues / his gyrdell / the kynge had vpon
Whiche shortly to grounde / falled adowne.

Wherby he perceyued / the great holynesse
Of blessed saynt Cead / and interyor deuocyon
Desyred his prayer / dayly with mekenesse
To almyghty god / for his remysyon
Frome thens departed / with his benedyccyon
Joyfull in his soule / towarde his place
Thankynge god mekely / of his great grace.

As the kynge promysed / to our sauour
Shortly he auoyded / all ydolatry
Brenned theyr ydolles / correcked theyr errour
Translated theyr temples / vnto god almyghty
Founded monasteryes / of relygyon many
Of men and women / gaue them possessyons
Landes / rentes / ryches / to encrease deuocyons

Namely he founded / a ryche monastery
For dethe of the prynces / in satysfaccyon
To the honour of god / and saynt Peter truly
Called Peterborowe abbay / in all this regyon
Endowed it with rentes / lybertes / possessyon
A place where many / relygious persones be
Seruyng day and nyght / our lorde with charyte.

Merburge.

e.ii.

Also there was founded / at Stone a pyore
 In the honour of god / and the martyrs twayne
 Possessed with landes / rentes and lyberte
 Where deuoute chanons / ben inhabyte certayne
 Miracles and sygnes / haue ben shewed there playne
 To the laude and prayse / of god omnyppotent
 And of these holy martyrs / patrones there present.

C Of the feruent desyre & great deuocyon y^r saynt Wer-
 burge hadde to be relygious / & of y^r dayly supplycacyōs
 she made to the kynge her father for the same. Ca. xiii.

As this myghty pynces / encreased in age
 So dayly encrefed / her good condycyons
 That greatly enioyed / her honorable lynage
 Consyderynge in her / suche vertuous dysposcyons
 In bygyls / prayers / and ghostly medytacyons
 Set all her mynde / power / myght / and mayne
 To serue our saupour / day and nyght certayne.

She well consydered / with due dyscrecyon
 Of this present lyfe / the great wretchydnesse
 How medefull it is / full of vanytyon
 Deceuable / peryllous / and of no sykernesse
 The tyme vncertayne / to be knowen doubtlesse
 For here is no cytee / nor sure dwellynge place
 All thyng is transytory / in short proces and space.

Wherefore this byrgyn / gladde and benyuolent
 folowynge the counseyll / of blessed Maathewe
 Was on of fyue byrgyns / euer redy present
 Had her lampe replete / with oyle full of vertue

Redy for to mete / her spouse swete Ihesu
With charytable werkes / in her soule contynuall
Therefore she was taken / to his blys eternall.

She well considered / the wordes of the gospels
Who refuses pleasures / and naturall generacyon
For the loue of Ihesu / rewarded shalbe well
With a hundreth folde grace / here for theyr guerdon
And after this lyfe / haue eterne fruytyon
Whiche she remembered / and euer fro that day
On her father wolde call / and mekely to hym say.

Reuerent myghty prync / and lord honorable
Most dere byloued father / my synguler helpe & socour
My trust / trefure / and solace / to me moost amiable
Instauntly I beseeche you / for loue of our sauoure
And of his mother mary / of byrgens the floure
With all the company / that in heuen be
My humble petrycyon / now graunt it vnto me.

Well byloued father / this is my fully mynde
My instaunte desyre / and humble supplicacyon
By the grace of god / maker of all mankynde
And by your lyfence / helpe / and turycyon
I purpose to enter / into holy relygyon
And utterly refuse / all pleasures transytory
To be professed / at the house of El.

O my dere doughter / sayd this noble kynge
My pleasure / solace / and hope of my gladnesse
Most dere byloued / and my synguler swete derlynge
I well consider / your vertue and sadnesse
Werburge. e.iii.

your instaunt request / and humble gentynesse
And of your desyre / inwardly I am gladd
But yet your motyon / makes my herte full sadde.

All my ioye and conforste / now resteth in the
Syth thy dere bretherne / from vs ben agone
Thou arte the trusty treasure / to thy mother and me
Our synguler solace / and sure consolacyon
Wherfore swete derlynge / as for my heyre alone
I wolde the mary / and a quene the make
If thou wyll consent / and my counseyll take.

Consyder and beholde / thugh all this lande
Take the a maryage / at thyne owne pleasure
A prynce moost balpaunt / moost noble to be founde
And of helpe and ayde / I shall the assure
With ryches / royalte / welthe / and trefure
Clothes of golde / and royall ryche apparell
And all thynges necessary / as man can of tell.

Remembre also / how after course of kynde
Age dothe sore greue / thy moder and me also
Therfore naturall loue (swete chyld) dothe me bynde
To gyue the best counseyll / what thou shall do
To honour and worshyp / how thou may come to
Whiche great renoune / and hye estate certayne
To se the a quene / wyll make vs yonge agayne.

God ordeyned matrimony / fyrst in Paradyse
Bytwene man & woman / whan he the worlde dyd make
That mankynde myght encrese / multiply and ryse
Eche persone at pleasure / a spouse for them to take

Now ioyned by holy chynche / all other to forsake
The chyld of the father / to take his dyscyplene
And after that to teche / his yssue theyr doctryne.

Also man and beest / haue dysposycyon naturall
To byynge forth theyr lykenesse / by generacyon
But man haunyng reason / and fre wyll with all
As lawe requyren / hath his procreacyon
Under true matrimony / by his owne eleccyon
Or els to oblerue / and lyue in pure bygynnyte
For the greater meryte / and rewarde of glorie.

And yf all maydens / shulde kepe theyr chastyte
As ye now do / how shulde the worlde encrese
Swete louely creature / ryght ioyfull wolde I be
To kysse a chyld of thyn / haunyng thy lykenesse
And se the also coronate / as a myghty pryncesse
Enclayne dere derlyng / thy mynde to myne entent
And all these sayd honours / wyll folowe consequent.

¶ Of the meke answere saynt Werburge gaue to her fa-
ther whan she was moeued to maryage. Ca. xiiii.

The holi mayd / wha she knewe her fathers mynde
Her soule was replete / with woo & penyuenesse
And sore began to wepe / after cours of kynde
The salte teeres dyspylled / for payne and heurynesse
By her ruddy chekes thynnyng / full fayre doubtelesse
Pyteous to beholde / but whan the foresayd mayde
Ceased of her sorowe / thus to hym she sayde.

Most beest beloued father / nexte to god almyght
Werburge. e. iiii.

your kynde gentyll mocyon / wolde moeue inwardely
The mynde of any creature / to folowe you ryght
Or any stony stomake / to relent and apply
And resolute eche harde herte / to waylynge dolefully
Consyderynge on euery parte / with good dyscrecyon
To accepte or refuse / this harde eleccyon.

Father I haue ben to you / meke and obedyent
Euer syth I had / yeres of dyscrecyon
Gladde to obserue / your hye commaundment
With loue interyor / and humble intencion
And so wyll contynue / with lowly submyssyon
In this present lyfe / whyle I do endure
Of my loue and prayer / euer ye shalbe sure.

But moost louely father / I pray you hertfully
Take no dyspleasure / pardon what I shall say
My soule / my herte / and mynde / is set stydfastly
To serue my lord god / nyght and also day
Neuer to be maryed / by no maner of way
For sothly I haue bowed / my true byrgynyte
Unto Ihesu / the seconde persone in trynityte.

That is my spouse / and blessed saupour
For whose loue refused / in certaynte haue I
All worldly pleasures / welth / ryches and honour
With all boyde busynesse / and cures transytory
My loue on hym is sette / so sure and feruently
That nothyng shall separate / my hert hym fro
Skenes nor helthe / pleasure / peyne / ne wo.

Also my full entent / was neuer otherwyse

Than to be handmayde / to my lord Ihesu
And of my soule and body / to make hym sacryfyce
for my ghostly welthe / all byces to subdue
He is my dere spouse / solace / helthe moost true
On hym is all my herte / and hase ben set alway
And euer shalbe / vnto my endynge day.

In this wretched worlde / we can not longe endure
And of this present lyfe / we are in no suerte
As we haue deserued / so we shalbe sure
After this pylgrymage / rewarded for to be
for mercy and grace / therfore mekely call we
Whyle we haue tyme and space / for than it is to late
When dethe with his darte / sayth to us chekemate.

Therefore dere father / I shewe you now agayne
All my hole herte / desyre and entent
Whiche euer hath ben / and so shalbe certayne
for to be relygious / chaste / and obedyent
Namely at thy / for thy vertue excellent
father I requyre you / for chrystes loue and charyte
My meke supplycacion / now graunte it vnto me.

The kynge well consydered / his daughters desyre
Her constaunte true mynde / and pure deuocyon
Graunted her petcyon / with synguler loue entyre
Trustynge by her prayer / and dayly supplycacion
Into heuen blysse / the rather for to come
Her mother Ermenyde / was gladd of this tydynge
And lauded full lowly / our lord and heuen kynge.

¶ Now saynt Werburge was made a moyne after her

desyre at the monastery of Ely vnder saynt Audy/lady
and abbesse. Ca. rb.

Than the kyng remembred / with due cōsistance
The excellent vertue / sadnes / and graunte
Of his dere doughter / and the pertyte constauce
Her humble petcyon / and pure byrgynye
He thanked our loʒde / with great humylyte
Of his insynpte grace / that so royall a floure
Frome hym descended / to his prayle and honoure.

He sende messages / in all goodly hast
With letters myssyue / thugh his regyon
Commaundynge his subiectes / they shulde full fast
By a day assygned / be redy euerychone
In theyʒ best maner / with hym for to gone
To bynge his doughter / to the hous of Ely
There to be relygyous / after her desydery.

When the day was come / of theyʒ appoyntment
The nobles of the realme / and lordes were redy
To attende on theyʒ souerayne / at his commaūdyment
Kyng Alfer prepared / all thyng pleasauntly
And of his court / had chosen a noble company
In theyʒ best aray / royalte / and renoune
To offer saynt Werburge / to god and relygion.

The kyng on his Journey / rode forthe royally
The quene hym folowed / as is the custome
Werburge succeded them consequently
The peeres and his counseyll / knewe well theyʒ rowme
Dukes / erles / lordes / and many a worthy barowne

**Knyghtes / loupers / gentyls / of her kynred also
With ladyes and gentyl women / & seruaūtes both two.**

**When the kynge approched / the sayd monastery
Saynt Audy than abbesse / toke her holy couent
And mette the sayd kynge / and all his company
With solempne processyon / and gretynge benyuolent
Prayfynge our lorde god omnyppotent
Whiche of his goodnes / to that congregacyon
Sende them a tyfter / of suche perfeccyon.**

**Whereburge requyred / by the order of charyte
Meekely on her knees / to enter relyggon
Saynt Audy receyued / of her benygnyte
And graunted fre lycence / after her petycyon
Gladde were also / the hole congregacyon
And sange (Te deum) with moche reuerence
Magnifyenge our lorde / of his prouydence.**

**She was receyued / with moche solempnyte
Into the holy order / after her entent
To proue her sadnes / and humylyte
(As is the custome) and so be obedyent
To lyue euer after / humble / chast / and contynent
Than dyd they Joye / merueylously encreas
Consyderynge her pacyens / and perfyte holynes.**

**Her royall dyademe / and shynyng coronall
Was fyrst refuted / for loue of our sauoure
The poore bayle accepted / and the symple pall
The royall ryche purpull / reiected that same houre
With other clothes of golde / sylkes of great honoure**

She toke lowe appareyll / bestures that were blake
All her plesaunt garmentes / she clerely dyd forsake.

Also she refused / her fathers realme and royalte
All ryches / rentes / pleasures / possessyon
With all worldely honoures / full of banyte
Lowly submyttinge her / vnder subieccyon
Vertu to encrese / myndynge moost relyggon
She refused yet more her owne proper wyll
But all to her abbesse / her order to fulfill.

C Of the great solempnyte kynge Aulfer made at the
ghostly maryage of saynt Alrburge his doughter / to al
his louers / colyns / and frendes. Ca. xvi.

Kynge Aulfer her father / at this ghostly spousage
Prepared great tryumphes / and solempnyte
Made a royall feest / as custome is of maryage
Sende for his frendes / after good humanyte
Kepte a noble houholde / thewed great lyberalyte
Bothe to ryche and poore / that to this feest wolde come
No man was denyed / euery man was well come.

Her uncles and aunces / were present there all
Ethelred / and Alrwalde / and Alrcelly also
The blessed kynges / whome sayntes we do call
Saint kenelwyd / saūt keneburg / they? systers both two
And of her noble lygnage / many other mo
Were redy that season / with reuerence and honour
At this noble tryumphe / to do all they? deuour.

Tho kynges mette them / with they? company

Egypte kyng of kent / brother to the quene
The seconde was Aldulphe kyng of the east party
Brother to saynt Audry / wyfe and mayde serene
With dryers of theyr progeny / and nobles as I wene
Dukes / erles / barons / and lordes ferre and nere
In theyr best aray / were present all in fere.

It were full teduous / to make descripcyon
Of the great tryumphes / and solemne royalte
Belongynge to the fest / the honour and prouysyon
By playne declaracyon / vpon euery partye
But the sothe to say / withouten ambyguyte
All herbes and floures / fragraunt sayre and swete
Were strawed in halles / and layd vnder theyr fete.

Clothes of golde and arras / were hanged in the hall
Depaynted with pectures / and hystories manyfolde
Well wrought and craftely / with precyous stones all
Glyteryng as Phebus / and the beten golde
Lyke an erthly paradyse / pleasaunt to beholde
As for the sayd moynes / was not them amonge
But prayenge in her cell / as done all nouyce yonge.

The story of Adam / there was goodly wrought
And of his wyfe Eue / bytweene them the serpent
How they were deceyued / and to theyr peynes brought
There was Cayn and Abell / offerynge theyr present
The sacryfyce of Abell / accepte full euident
Cuball and Cubalcain / were purtrayed in that place
The inuentours of musyke / and craftes by great grace.

Noe and his schyppe / was made there curiously

Sendyng forth a rauen / whiche neuer came agayne
And how the douue retourned / with a braunche hastily
A token of conforte and peace / to man certayne
Abraham there was / standyng upon the mount playne
To offer in sacryfyce / Isaac his dere sone
And how the shepe for hym / was offered in oblacyon.

The twelue sones of Jacob / there were in purtrayture
And how into Egypt / yonge Joseph was solde
There was inprysoned / by a false coniectour
After in all Egypte / was ruler (as is tolde)
There was in pecture / Moyses wyse and bolde
Our lorde apperyng / in busshes flammyng as fyre
And nothyng therof brent / lese / tree / nor spyre.

The ten plages of Egypte / were well embost
The chyldren of Israell / passyng the reed see
Kyng Pharoo drowned / with all his proude hoost
And how the two tables / at the mounte of Synaye
Were gyuen to Moyses / and how soone to ydolatry
The people were prone / and punysht were therfore
How Datan and Abyron / for pryde were lost full poure.

Duke Josue was ioyned / after them in pecture
Ledyng the Iherelytes / to the lande of promysyon
And how the sayd lande / was dyuyded by mesure
To the people of god / by equall sundry porcyon
The Judges and bysshops / were there euerychone
Theyr noble actes / and tryumphes Marcyall
Freshly were browded / in these clothes royall.

Nerte to hye boorde lorde / appered fayre and bryght

Kyng Saul and Dauid / and prudent Salomon
Roboas succedynge / whiche soone lost his myght
The good kyng Elechys / and his generacyon
And so to the Machabees / and dyuers other nacyon
All these sayd stowres / so ryche done and wrought
Belöngyng to kyng Aulfer / agayn y^e tyme were brought

But ouer the hye desse / in the pryncypall place
Where the sayd the kynges / late crowned all
The best hallynge hanged / as reason was
Wherein were wrought / the .ix. ordres angelycall
Dyuyded in the Ierarchyes / not cessynge to call
Sanctus / sanctus / sanctus / blessed be the trynyte
Dominus deus sabaoth / the persones in one deyte.

Nexte in ordre surynge / sette in goodly purtrapture
Was our blessed lady / floure of femynyte
With the twelue apostles / echeone in his fygure
And the foure euangelystes / wrought moost curyously
Also the dyscyples / of chryst in theyr degre
Prechyng and techynge / vnto euery nacyon
The saythtes of holy chyrche / for theyr saluacyon.

Martyrs than folowed / ryght manyfessly
The holy innocentes / whome Herode had slayne
Blessed saynt Stephan / the prothomartyr truly
Saynt Laurence / saynt Vincet / sufferynge great payne
With many other mo / than here ben now certayne
Of whiche sayd martyrs / example we may take
Pacynce to obserue / in herte for chrystes sake.

Confessours approached / ryght conuenient

freschely embroded / in ryche tyllhewe and tyne
Saynt Nicholas saynt Benedycte / and his couent
Saynt Jerom / Basylyus / and saynt Augustyne
Gregory the great doctour / Ambrose and saynt Martyne
All these were sette / in goodly purtrayture
Them to beholde / was a heuently pleasure.

Argyns them folowed / crowned with the lylly
Amonge whome our lady / chefe presydent was
Some crowned with rooses / for theyr great vyctory
Saynt Katheryne / saynt Margarete / saynt Agathas
Saynt Cyrcly / saynt Agnes / and saynt Charytas
Saynt Lucye / saynt Wenefryde / and saynt Apolyn
All these were brothered / the clothes of golde within.

Upon the other syde / of the hall sette were
Noble auncyent storyes / & how the stronge Sampson
Subdued his enemyes / by his myghty power
Of Hector of Troy / slayne by fals treason
Of noble Arthur / kyng of this regyon
With many other mo / whiche it is to longe
Playnly to expresse / this tyme you amonge.

The tables were couered / with clothes of wyaper
Rychely enlarged / with syluer and with golde
The cupborde with plate / shynnyng fayre and clere
Marshallles theyr offyces / fulfilled manyfolde
Of myghty wyne plenty / bothe newe and olde
All maner kynde / of meetes delycate
(Whan grace was sayd) to them was preparete.

To this noble feest / there was suche ordynauce

That nothyng wanted / that gotten myght be
On see and on lande / but there was habundaunce
Of all maner pleasures / to be had for monye
The bordes all charged / full of meet plente
And dyuers subtyltes / prepared sothly were
With cordyall spyces / theyr ghestes for to chere.

The Joyfull wordes / and swete communycayon
Spoken at the table / it were harde to tell
Eche man at lyberte / without interrupcyon
Bothe sadnes and mythes / also pryue counsell
Some adulacyon / some the truthe dyd tell
But the great astatys / spake of theyr regyons
Knyghtes of theyr chyualry / of craftes the comons.

Certayne at eche cours / of serurye in the hall
Trumpettes blewe vp / shalmes and claryons
Shewyng theyr melody with / toynes musycall
Dyuers other mynstrelles / in crafty proporcyons
Made swete concordance / and lussy dryfcyons
An heuenly pleasure / suche armory to here
Reioysyng the hertes / of the audyence full clere.

A synguler mynstrell / all other ferre passyng
Toyned his instrument / in pleasaunte armory
And sange moost swetely / the company gladyng
Of myghty conquerours / the famous byctory
Wherwith was rauysht / theyr spyrytes and memory
Specyally he sange / of the great Alexandere
Of his tryumphes and honours / enduryng. xii. yere.

Solemply he sange / the state of the Romans
Werburge f.i.

Ruled vnder kynges / by polycy and wysedome
Of theyr hye iustyce / and ryghtfull ordynauns
Dayly encreasynge / in worshyp and renowne
Tyll Tarquyne y^r proude kyng / with y^r great cōfusiōn
Oppressed dame Lucrece / the wyfe of Colatyne
Kynges neuer reygned in Rome / syth that tyme.

Also how the Romainys / vnder thre dyctatours
Gouerned all reygons / of the worlde ryght wysely
Tyll Iulys Cesar / excellynge all conquerours
Subdued Pompeius / and toke the hole monarchy
And the rule of Rome / to hymselfe manfully
But Cassius Brutus / the fals conspyratour
Caused to be slayne / the sayd noble emperour.

After the sayd Iulys / succeeded his syster sone
Called Octauianus / in the imperyll see
And by his precepte / was made descrypcyon
To euery reyon / lande / shyre / and cytee
A trybute to pay / vnto his dygnyte
That tyme was / vniuersall peas and honour
In whiche tyme was borne / our blessed sauoure.

All these hyfforpes / noble and auncient
Reioysynge the audyence / he sange with pleasuer
And many other mo / of the newe testament
Pleasaunt and profytable / for theyr soules cure
Whiche he omittet / now not put in bry
The mynysters were redy / theyr offyce to fulfyll
To take vp the tables / at theyr lordes wyll.

When this noble feest / and great solemnyte.

Dayly endurynge / a longe tyme and space
 Was royally ended / with honour and royalte
 Eche kynge at other / lyfence taken hace
 And so departed from thens / to theyr place
 Kynge Gulfer retourned / with worshyp and renowne
 Frome the house of Ely / to his owne mansyon.

C Of the holy professyon & ghostly conuersacyon saynt
 Werburge bled at Ely in relyggon / vnder saynt Audy
 her abbessle and cosyn. Ca. xvi.

So whan this byrgyn / the spouse of Ihesu
 Had fully contynued / in holy relyggon
 With mekenesse / pacyngs / and all vertu
 Fully the yere / of her probacyon
 Than she made instaunce / for her professyon
 Unto saynt Audy / her lady and abbessle
 Whiche soone was graunted / with great gladnesse.

Dynaunce they made / and great royalte
 Her frendes were called / agaynst that season
 She was professed / with great humylyte
 The obseruaunce done / with due deuocyon
 She made solempne bowe / of ghostly conuersacyon
 Meekely to obserue / obedience and chastyte
 Endurynge her lyfe / and wylfull pouerte.

By the exsample / of her perfeccyon
 Many dyuers persones / of her noble lynage
 Refused this worlde / and entred relyggon
 Renouynge bayne pleasures / ryches and maryage
 Enclyned to bertue / for theyr ghostly auauntage
Werburge f. ii.

As may be specyfied / here after folowynge
Theyr names / theyr astate / and theyr good lyuynge.

Now this glorious byrgyn / after her deſyre
Is ghoffly marved / to our lorde Iheſu
Accordynge to her entent / and true loue entyre
She dayly encreſed / frome vertu to vertu
With more ſtrayter lyfe / byces to ſubdu
The longer ſhe endured / in relygyon
The better ſhe prepared / her herte to deuocyon.

And tho this byrgyn / clerely dyd forſake
All ryches honours / and pleasures worldly
With all poſſeſſions / for her lordes ſake
She thought than ſhe reygned / moost lyke a lady
Cause that ſhe lyued / in chryſtes ſeruyce dayly
And certayne it is / holy ſcrypture recordynge
Who ſerues well god / dothe reygne lyke a kynge.

In prayer / penaunce / and / contemplacyon
Was all her buſyneſſe / and ſtudy alway
Compasynge by what maner of medytacyon
She myght beſt pleaſe / our lorde to his pay
Offerynge her perſone / a true ſacryfyce every day
No labour her greued / loue was ſo feruent
Her body vpon erthe / her ſoule in heuen lent.

Sweete / comly creatures / ladyes euerychone
Sekynge for pleasures / ryches and arayment
Blynded by your beaute / and ſynguler affectyon
Conſyder this byrgyn / humble and pacyent
A ſpectacle of vertue / euer obedyent.

Beholde how she hase / clerely layde away
Her royall ryche clothes / and is in meke aray.

your garmentes now be gay and glorypous
Euery yere made / after a newe inuencion
Of sylke and beluet / costely and pcecyous
Brothered full rychely / after the best facyon
Shynnyng lyke angels / in your opynyon
Wher lesse wolde suffyse / and content as well
As all that great cost / folowynge wyse counsell.

A playne example / now ye may take
Of this myghty kynges doughter dere
Whiche for the loue of god / dyd forsake
All such bayne pleasures / and garmentes clere
She gaue herselfe / to penaunce and prayere
Wherfore saye ladyes / do waye such vanyte
Prepare yourselfe / to vertue and humylyte.

Some of lowe byrthe / excellynge theyr degre
Doe couet to haue / as royall ryche vesture
Worldly honours / also the sufferaynte
As they were ladyes / by lyne of nature
Of dredefull mysery / they bere the fygure
Proude as a Pecoche / whelynge full bryght
All is but vanyte / contentynge the syght.

B Glorypous byrgyn / replete with synguler grace
Endowed with souerayne gyftes celestypall
Refusynge boide pleasures / whan thou had space
And honours transitory / whiche hath brought in thall
A thousande persones / in ruyne to fall
Werburge.

f.iii.

A myrrour thou arte / of bygynall clennes
Of true obedience / and perfyte mekenes.

So Werburge professed / to her rule full ryght
A redolent floure / all vertue to augment
As Lucyfer shynynge / a clere lampe of lyght
for whome her spouse / god sone omnyppotent
Shewed many myracles / to euery pacient
A sygne her loue was / supernaturall
Closed in our lorde / by grace supernall.

The excellent goodnes / of this moyne
And fame of vertue / with humylyte
Transcended all other / in perfyte holynes
So that sundry persones / approached that party
for ghosly conforte / counsell and remedy
Suche as to her came / penyue / woo / and sadde
Departed ioyfull / in soule mery and gladde.

She dayly prouyded / for ghosly treasure
To buyde her a place / a sure mansyon
Euer to remaine / with ioye and endure
In pleasure perpetuall / without corrupcyon
Whiche she optayned / by her deuocyon
After this departure / to reygne as a presydent
In eterne blys / with god omnyppotent

¶ A lytell treatyse of the lyfe of saynt Audy abbessle of
Ely / and of her holy couersacyon and great deuocyon /
bnder whome saynt Werburge was made nonne / and
professed.

Ca. xiii.

The yere of our lorde. bi. C. ix. and thyrty
 Regned saynt Anna / kynge of east Englande
 Whiche maryed saynt Herewith / of the North party
 They had noble yssue / as we vnderstande
 Prynce Aldulph and Jurmyne / in story as is founde
 Saynt Serburge the quene / and blessed Audry
 Saynt Ethelberge / Withburge / a holy progeny.

This blessed Audry / called Etheldred
 Of two great kyngedomes / lynyally descendynge
 Was borne in Suffolke / as sayth saynt Bede
 In a lytell byllage / called Ermynge
 This noble prynces / and dere derlynge
 With many great vertues / of grace illumynate
 Magnyfyed her parage / and royall astate.

This blessed Audry / from her yonge aeye
 Was dysposed euer / vnto sadnes
 Obedyent lowly / vnto her parentage
 Encreasyng in vertue / and constaunt sobrynes
 Worldely pleasures / dysportes / and wantonnes
 Lyghtnes of language / and all presumpcyon
 In this sayd begyn / had no domynacyon.

Sad and demure / she was in countenaunce
 Nothyng enclyned / vnto fragylte
 Benyng and pacient / without perturbaunce
 Meke / curteys / gentyll / full of humylyte
 Pryde / statelenes / and sensualyte
 Were not in her soude / by any condycyon
 Curteyse in byhaour / vnto euery persone.

No man was greued / nor toke dyspleasure
At this sayd mayden / in her fathers hall
Euery honest personē / and reasonable creature
Were pleased with her / bothe one and all
None dyscontent / pryuate nor generall
She was so meke / and full of pacyence
That people desyred / to come to her presence.

She was beauteous / fayre and amiable
Pleasaunte to beholde / in gyftes of nature
Her countenaunce comly / swete / louely / and stable
Nothyng dysposed / vnto worldely pleasure
More lyke an angell / by all coniecture
Than a fragyll mayde / of sensuall appetyte
For in bayne pleasures / she had no delyte.

When that she came / to yerres of dyscrecyon
Pyuers her moeued / in way of maryage
Some offered ryches / royalte / and renowne
Some other possessyons / landes and herytage
And some the sufferaynte / her mynde to asswage
All these she refused / for the loue of Ihesu
To whome she auowed / her chastyte full tru.

After that Venus / had her longe assayed
To peruerte her mynde / to worldly affectyon
And of all nettes and engynes / therof had sayled
Than came to her presence / a prynce of renowne
Called duke Combert / of the east regyon
Whiche longe desyred / to haue her in spousage
At the laste optayned / the wyll of her parentage.

Unto whiche thyng / he wolde neuer enclyne
for all the mocyon / of her hye parentes
Tyll she was assured / by heuenly doctryne
To kepe her byrgynye / clere in conspencs
Than she consented / without concupyscens
And with the sayd duke / she lyued in chastyte
Bothe mayden and wyfe / almost yeres thre.

After whose dethe / she remayned in Ely
In fastynge / prayer / bygyis / and penaunce
Whiche place was gyuen / to her Joynt and dowry
By Combert her husbnde / with great pleasaunce
This yle of Ely / by deuyne purueaunce
With muddy waters / is compased aboute
Theyr enemyes to greue / and strongly to holde out.

Thyder came Egbyrt / kyng of the north parte
To desyre saynt Audry / in matrimony
To whome she wolde neuer / consent in herte
for no maner counseyll / that myght be done truly
Tho her syster Serburge / moeued her tenderly
Tyll the angell of god / assured her to be
Quene / wyfe / and mayde / keepynge byrgynye.

Than Audry graunted / maryed for to be
Unto this foresayd / noble kyng Egtryde
And at the maryage / was great solemnyte
Tryumphes honoures / on euery syde
Great cost and royalte / they dyd prouyde
Frome Ely departed / vnto his owne place
In the North parte dwellynge / with great solace.

Merburge.

g.i.

By the grace of our lord god / moost of myght
And helpe of his mother / blessed mayd mary
By prayer of Audry / and by myracle ryght
Toggyder they lyued / bothe in pure chastyte
The naturall mocyon / of his lascypte
Was shortly slaked / and feruent desyre
By myracle / as water quencheth the fyre.

When he apperceyued / her asured constauce
Her perfyte holynes / and chaste contynence
His herte reioiced / of her contynuaunce
Of whome she desyred / with humble reuerence
And synguler supplicacyon / to haue fre lysence
At Canwood abbay / to enter relyggon
Whiche the kynge graunted / for her deuocyon.

Saynt Ebba syster / unto saynt Ofwolde
Was abbesse and ruler / of that congregacyon
Where blessed Audry / ryght as she wolde
Was reuerently receyued / into relyggon
And after the yere / of her probacyon
Professed there was / by bysshop Wylfryde
Where all worldly honours / she set on syde.

Frome thens she departed / to the ple of Ely
More quyetly to lyue / out of busynesse
For dede of the kynge / her husbände truly
Purposynge to take her / frome that holynesse
She toke two maydens / with her doubtlesse
And in theyr Journay / our lord of his grace
Shewed dyuers myracles / at eche restinge place.

The archebysshop of yorke / Wylfryde her confessour
Was depyved frome his benyfyce / by the kynge cruelly
Observed pacyence / laudynge our saupour
And folowed saynt Audry / to the place of Ely
Whiche (as afore is sayd) was her Joynt and dowry
And electe her abbesse / on that congregacyon
Most worthy to be / for her holy conuersacyon.

Where Audry buryded / a chyrche of our lady
With helpe of kynge Aldulph / her brother naturall
Dystaunt a myle / frome the olde monastery
Founde by saynt Austyn / for meryte spyrtyuall
Whiche place all desolate / the edyfied full specyall
By her prouysyon / an other noble monastery
The yere of grace / fyre hundreth seuenty and thre.

When the werke was ended / as her wyll was
She endowed the abbay / with fraunches and lyberte
And gaue the hole yle of Ely / to that place
With all commodytes / profettes / and yssues fre
Frome all exaccyons / exempte clerely to be
Of kynge and bysshop / confyrmed it at Rome
With all prelates & prynces / consentynge of this regno

In short tyme and space / to Audry dyd resorte
Relygious men and women / a great company
Professed in that place / for theyr ghostly conforste
Renounsynge bayne pleasures / & honours translytory
Amonge whome saynt Werburge / professed solemply
Promysed in audyence / to lyue a lyfe monestycall
After saynt Benettes rule / for the lyfe eternall.

Werburge

g.ii.

Also the yere of grace / fyre hundredth seuenty and nyne
 In the moneth of Julii / in the nyynth kalendas
 To heuen departed / saynt Audry the quene
 Than reygnyng in Kent / kyng Lothary by grace
 Aldulph in eest Englande / her brother whiche was
 Kyng Offryde her husbände / in Northumberlande
 Also kyng Ethelrede / than reygnyng in Mercelande

A breue rehersal of y^r lyfe of saynt Serburge / graūd
 mother to saynt Werburge. And of her comynge to Ely
 to her syster Audry from Shepay monastery. Ca. xix.

The holy matrone / and quene saynt Serburge
 A kynges doughter / a moder to kynges twayne
 Syster to saynt Audry / a graundmother to Werburge
 Of noble parentage / is comen certayne
 Of two realmes descendynge / lynyally and playne
 By her father / from the realme of eest Englande
 And by her mother / frome Northumberlande.

Her father saynt Anna / as sayth myne auctour
 Was kyng of the eest parte / sone to Egnicius
 Whiche Anna was maryed / with moche honour
 To Hereswith / doughter to kyng Herericus
 And syster to saynt Hylde / the byrgyn gracyous
 To whome saynt Edwyn / the glorvous martyr
 Kyng of Northumberlande / was great graundfather.

This sayd kyng Anna / lyued a longe space
 In welthe / worthyp / honour / and prosperyte
 With his quene Hereswith / by synguler grace
 Obseruyng Justyce / pacence / and equitye

Kepte the preceptes / of god almyghte
Mercyfull and lyberall / to the poore in payne
Whiche kynge by Benda / was murdred and slayne.

As the ryuer passeth / oftetymes the heed fountayne
The lytell grasse or ympe / transcendeth the tree
Lyke wyse theyr chyldren / encreased certayne
In mekenes / pacence / and perfyte charyte
Aboue theyr parentes / in vertue and benygnyte
So that theyr name / lynage / and hye estate
By them was magnifyed / prayled and decorate.

Kynge Anna and Herewith / had a noble yssue
Syrre goodly chyldren / pleasaunt to beholde
None fayrer in this lande / myndynge all vertue
And to all good maners / dysposed manyfolde
yet was theyr fayrenes / not equall to be tolde
To theyr deuocyon / and synguler goodnes
Whose names expressed / ben afoze doubtles.

Serburge the eldest / of the systers all
Instructe by her parentes / in vertuous dyscypline
folowynge theyr counsell / in herte full specyall
Prepared her soule / after theyr doctryne
For aboue the age / of so yonge a femynyne
So that euery day / by grace and wysdome
In her dyd growe / some plant of deuocyon.

In all this realme / dylated was her fame
That whan she approched / vnto lawfull aage
Prynces / dukes / erles / herynge of her name
Desyred to haue Serburge / in maryage
Merburge.

g.iii.

And busily laboured / vnto her parentage
This mayd was maryed / with honour full excellent
Vnto Ercombert / the noble kynge of Kent.

To whome kynge Ethelbyct / graundfather was
The fyrst chrysten kynge / of Saxons and chefe floure
Baptysed by saynt Austyn / thurgh heuently grace
He was to holy chyrche / a specyall benefactour
Monasteryes and pyozes / founded with great honoure
Kynge Eadbalde his sone / eremple of hym toke
Whiche was father to Ercombert / as sayth my boke.

This lady Serburge / circumfused with grace
After her desyre / and vertuous entent
Had leuer the monastery / than the saye palace
The chyrche to bylte / than with maryage be lent
But to her parentes / she was euer obedyent
Folowynge theyr counseyll / and of her frendes dere
In lawfull maryage / toke the sayd kynge her sere.

A noble generacyon / she hadde by the kynge
Egbyct and Lothary / two mynces prepotent
And two holy daughters / in vertue shynynge
Ermenylde and Erhengode / by lynyall descent
This Ermenylde maryed / with honour equyvalent
Vnto kynge Gulfer / had a royall yssue
The glorious Werburge / replete with vertue.

Her sytter Erhengode / refused vtterly
Honours / worship / and worldly possession
Ryches / maryage / and pleasures transytory
Went vnto fraunce / with humble deuocyon

At the Cytee of Burges / entred relyggon
Where Ethelberge her aunt / was ruler and abbesse
Cogyder they lyued / in perfyte holynesse.

This honorable Serburge / and blessed matrone
Refusynge worldly honours / and solempryte
Preferred mekenesse / and perfyte deuocyon
Above all ryches / power and dygnyte
Auoyded ambycyon / obserued humylyte
Upon poore people / euer had compassyon
And them releued / with due mynystracyon.

She made her palace / manytymes an hospytall
Her pryuate cubycle / a deuoute oratory
As a kynde mother amiable / in courte and in hall
Stekely fulfilled / the seuen werkes of mercy
Oftetymes in the chyrche / selde amonge compainy
yet euer whan she myght / haue tyme and space
Magnifyed and praysed / our lord in secrete place.

She instructe her husbände / in ghostly vertu
To great holynesse / and synguler perfeccyon
So by her counseyll / with the grace of Ihesu
Frome infydelyte / purged was that regyon
Destroyed theyr ydolles / theyr sectes euerychone
Restaured temples / vnto chrystes honour
Founded monasteryes / by her cost and labour.

The kyng by her mocyon / commaunded straitly
All his people and subiectes / vpon sharpe correccyon
To obserue prayer / and penaunce deuoutely
And truly for to fast / the holy tyme of Lenton
Serburge.

g.iiii.

The archbysshop Theodorus / and fathers of relygion
Consyderynge her pacyence / and benygnyte
Reioysed in her dedes / and prayled the trynyte.

When the famous Ercombert / the sayd kyng of Kent
foure & twenty yere had reigned / in honour full royall
With blessed Serburge / his quene excellent
Than he departed / frome this lyfe mortall
The quene prepared / the obsequyes funerall
With great lamentacyon / and great royalte
As was conuenient / for his state and degre.

After that Serburge / refused worldly pleasure
Entred relygion / professed chastyte
At Shepay monastery / in Kent full sure
Buylded at her cost / full honorable
After electe Abbesse / and ruler of that companye
To whome she was / a myrrour of mekenes
And exemple of vertue / and proued holynes.

As she was occupped / in medytacyon
An heuenly messanger / to her was sent
Shewyng how for synne / and transgressyon
Englande shulde suffer / great punysment
And be subdued / with greuous torment
Wherefore she lefte / in good rule that place
And dyd electe to them / an other abbace.

Serburge toke lycence / of her systers all
Commendynge them / vnto the trynyte
And so departed / fro her chyldren spyrytuall
With labour attayned / to the hous of Cye

There to be subiecte / to Her syfter Audye
And to her doctryne / apply her entent
Unto relygion / euer founde obedyent.

Saynt Audy was gladde / of her syfters comynge
In lyke maner / were all the hole congregacyon
With myrthes and solace / in soule reioysynge
To haue the presence / of so worthy a persone
There lyued togyder / in perfyte deuocyon
Tyll blessed Audy / frome this lyfe mortall
Departed was / to the lyfe eternall.

After whose buryall / Sexburge was electe
To be abbesse and ruler / ouer that couent
Whiche to all vertue / her mynde dyd erecte
And the .xvi. yere after / with labours dyligent
She translate saynt Audy / that noble presydent
Beynge hole incorrupte / also substancyall
In body and in besture / by grace supernall.

¶ How saynt Ermenylde after the dethe of kynge Aul
fer her husbade was made a nonne at Ely / vnder her mo
ther saynt Sexburge abbesse / and Alrburge her de
uoute daughter. Ca.xx.

¶ If Alrcyres the kynge / whā the foresayd Aulfere
Had reigned in honour / worship and royalte
With saynt Ermenylde his quene / fully .xvii. yere
Unto euerlastynge blyss / departed than he
And buryed was / with moche solempnyte
In Lychefeld chyrche / after hym there dyd succede
Into the kyngdome / his brother Ethelrede.

The quene for her husbande / made great lamentacyon
Dolefully lamentynge / nyght and day his departure
As nature enquired / enduryng a longe season
Remayned in wydohode / and mournynge besture
yet after all heuynesse / penaunce / and dyscomfytur
She reioysed in soule / to be at lyberte
Entendynge relyggon / by grace of the trynitye.

Soone she departed / to the hous of Ely
Refusynge this worlde / pleasures possessyon
Instauntly requyred / with perfyte humylyte
To be a moyne / accepte in relyggon
Gladde was the abbelle / of her conuersyon
And thanked our lorde / of his specyall grace
So dyd all the systers / within the sayd place.

Her naturall mother / blessed Serburge
That tyme was lady / and chefe presydent
There was professed / her doughter Werburge
An exemple of mekenes / to all the couent
Ermenyde thanked god / and was obedyent
To her mother Serburge / a myrrour of vertu
Also to her doughter / the spouses of Ihesu.

It passeth mannes reason / playnly to expresse
Her vertuous lyfe / and ghostly conuersacyon
In prayer / penaunce / and proued mekenesse
In perfyte obedyence / and synguler deuocyon
In vyrgyls / abstynence / and in hye perfeccyon
The cotydyane labours / her body to chastyce
That her soule may be / to god true sacryfyce.

By cause that Werburge / in order was senpoure
Her mother Ermenylde / gaue her the sufferaynte
Preferrynge her doughter / with mekenes and honoure
But yet her doughter / of a naturall ampte
Preferred her mother / with humble senporyte
And so bytwene them / was a swete contencion
Wheder shulde more subiecte be / to other in relyggon.

Afore whan Ermenylde / was vnder maryage
Unto holy matrones / she was comparable
Sara / Rebecca / Rachell / and Sybell sage
And saynt Elysabeth / with other mo honorable
Now in relyggon / she is moost notable
Knownen by her vertues / and sadde dyspolicyn
That vnder matrimony / was her intencion.

Ermenylde subdued / by synguler deuynne grace
All fragyll mocyns / and sensualyte
Lyke maner as Iudyth / Oloernes slayne hase
She mortyfied all pleasures / lustes and volupte
Lyke wyse as Jaell / dyd the prynce Sylare
A duches of vertue / as whylom was Delbora
Used the oratory / in prayer as dyd Anna.

After the departure / and wofull buryall
Of Serburge her mother / abbess and lady
Her doughter Ermenylde / the blessed monnyall
Was chosen abbess / and ruler of El
As sheweth dan Wylliam / of Maluytburp
How fyrst was Audrey / than Serburge her syster
Afterwarde was abbess / Ermenylde her doughter.

The lyfe of Ermenylde / was euer vertuous
Pleasant to god / and her sisters euerychone
In the syght of god / her dethe was precious
Playnly notyfied / by her conuersacyon
She vertuously gouerned / her congregacyon
Frome this lyfe departed / to eternall glory
As sayth her legende / the Idus of february.

And buryed was / with moche lamentacyon
In the holy monastery / and house of Ely
Amonge her parentage / and congregacyon
Where she is thyned / with her aunt saynt Audy
And with her mother / saynt Serburge ryche
For whome our sauyour / of his specyall grace
Sheweth dayly myracles / in that sayd place.

One of the myracles / we shall now rehers
Our lord for her shewed / at Ely abbay
After her translacyon / the story dothe expres
It fortunied in Whytson weke / vpon a thursday
An Englysshman was bounden / in wofull aray
Fetered with yrons / bothe on handes and fete
Wrongfully accused / as ye may all wete.

By instaunt request / he gate hym lycence
To vlyste the tombe / of saynt Ermenylde
Whome he requyred / with humble reuerence
And meke petycyon / frome the herte full mylde
To be delyuered / and fully reconfylde
Whose humble desyre / and synguler supplicacyon
Was fully graunted / to his consolacyon.

At this tyme / whan this holy man was prayenge
 Whan the Deken redde the holy gospel
 By meane of Ermenylde / to our lorde and kyng
 Frome his handes and fete / the yrons done fell
 By grace aboue nature / merueylously to tell
 That the sayd yrons / insyght of all the betherne
 Sprange by sodenly / and lyght vpon the aulter.

¶ Aliud miraculum.

Another myracle / declare now may we
 Done at the sayd Cy / by this holy matrone
 In presence of the pryor / and all the fraternyte
 Whiche pryor of this mater / had best notycyon
 Ascole mayster of Innocentes / after the custome
 Gaue ysence / vpon saynt Ermenyldes day
 To all his chyldren / to sport them in play.

Whan the feest / and solempnyte was done
 The yonge tender chyldren / wanton and nedlygent
 Dredynge theyr mayster / for fere of correccyon
 To the holy thyrne / they assembled full dyligent
 Trustynge therby of pardon / after theyr entent
 Desyred theyr mayster / for saynt Ermenyldes sake
 To pardon theyr trespas / and no dyspleasure take.

The mayster fulfylled / with hastynes and euny
 Toke them frome the tombe / with great indygnacyon
 Without dyscrecyon / punysshed them greuouly
 Gyuynge no honour / to the saynt ne deuocyon
 Rebuked them sore / sayenge with insultacyon
 Croue ye to be spared / from punysshment this day
 For saynt Ermenyldes sake / nay nay do way.

After all this done / the nexte nyght folowynge
Whan the sayd mayster / to his bedde was gone
His great brynnydenes / saynt Ermenylde remembreynge
He warned hym Justly / after his guerdon
His handes and his fete / prompte to persecucyon
Were sodenly smytten / made lame / contracte also
No power had to ryse / to moeue nor to go.

This todayne punysshement / langour / confusyon
Aered hym greuously in all his body
Moost terryble of all / of helthe desperacyon
Inwardly hym troubled / with peynes horryble
But yet by grace / he thought best remedy
Sende for his chyldren / vpon the other day
Humble asked them pardon / in a wofull aray.

Desyrynge his scolers / for loue and charyte
To cary hym moost carefull / to her sepulture
To requyre for hym grace / helthe and prosperyte
Of god and saynt Ermenylde / with all theyr cure
They toke hym tenderly / ye may me leue full sure
Amonge them all / with mynde delygent
And brought to the shryne / this wretched impotent.

They prayed for hym / to our blessed sauyour
And to saynt Ermenylde / a longe tyme and space
Knelynge on theyr knees / wepyng full sore
In prayer and psalmody / for his helthe and solace
And so contynuyng / by our lordes great grace
He that afore was lame / bothe on fote and hande
Restored to helthe / departed hole and sounde.

T How kynge Ethelrede seynge the holy conuersacyon
of Werburge his nece / made her lady and abbesse at Cle
don / Trentam / and Humbury. And by her counseill and
exsample was made moke at Bardeney abbay. Ca. xxi.

T He famous prynce / and foresayd Ethelrede
Brother to kynge Aulfer / as lawfull enherytour
To the sayd kyngedome / dyd nexte hym succede
Elected of his peeres / with worship and honour
Permytted by his chyrche / to be theyr gouernour
Bycause prynce Kenrede / his brother sone
Was yonge and not able / to rule his kyngdome.

This sayd kynge Ethelrede / clerely consyderynge
With due circumstaunce / the hye perfeccyon
Of Werburge his nece / and vertuous lyuynge
Her great holynesse / and ghostly conuersacyon
Dayly encreasyng / with feruent deuocyon
The excellent fame / and myracles full ryght
Shewed by our sauour / bothe day and nyght.

These good examplers / grounded in vertu
Moued kynge Ethelrede / in soule and in mynde
And clerely conuerted / thowhe the grace of Ihesu
To despyse this worlde / wretched and blynde
Pryncypally by grace / wyten as we fynde
For her great goodnes / and vertues excellent
He made her lady / ruler / and president.

Ouer all the nonnes / of euery monastery
Within his realme / to gouerne and to guyde
To instructe and informe / and to exemplary

To encrese deuocyon / bpon euery syde
Vertue to exalte / to subdue vyce and pryde
That holy relyggon / pleasaunt to chryst Ihesu
Myght dayly encrese / frome vertu to vertu.

Also he gaue Werburge / great possessyon
Landes / and rentes / ryches withall
To edify and repayre / places of relyggon
After her desyre / with fauour specyall
Wherwith she buylded / famous memorypall
Two fayre monasteryes / Trentam and Humbury
Possessed with rentes / landes / and lyberte.

Also by sufferaunce / of the sayd kynge truly
She translate the kynges maner of Medon
Whiche was in Hamptonshyre / vnto a monastery
Of holy women / obseruynge relyggon
Suffyciently endowed / with lybertes / possessyon
Of whiche sayd places / she had the gouernaunce
As worthy maystres / all vertue to auaunce.

The yere of grace / fyre hundreth foure score and nyen
As sheweth myne auctour / a Bryton Giraldus
Kynge Ethelred / myndynge moost the blysse of heuen
Edyfied a collage chyrche / notable and famous
In the subbarbes of Chester / pleasaunt and beauteous
In the honour of god / and the Baptyst saynt Johan
With helpe of bysshop Aulfryce / and good exortacyon.

Also at the humble / and synnguler supplicacyon
Of blessed Egwyn / bysshop of worcestur
This kynge gaue a place / for a fundacyon

To buyde a monastery / to relygious brethur
At Eufam vpon Auen / for heuenly tresur
With a large precinct / to compas all the abbay
More quietly to serue / our sauyour nyght and day.

After this tyme / Ethelrede the kynge
By his counseyll marped / a beautefull lady
Called quene Edryde / a woman of good luyng
Borne in the North parte / doughter to kynge Edwy
To whome saynt Oswalde / was vncle truly
The yssue betwene them / after to succede
Was a noble prynce / nomynate Colrede.

Agaynst his enemyes / the kynge gate vitory
Fortunate in batayle / sore oppressed Kent
In all this regyon / famous was his chyualry
Namely he subdued / at the water of Trent
Edryde of Northumberlande / a kynge auncient
His brother in lawe / whan Edryde agaynst reason
Entred his landes / by subtyll intrusyon.

But after that Edryde / his quene was slayne
By people of the North parte / moost cruelly
The kynge frome that tyme / by grace certayne
Chaunged his maners / and luyng dayly
Frome temporall cures / and busynesse worldly
To ghostly werkes / and contemplacyon
Seking for heuen / with pure deuocyon.

Specyally he folowed / saynt Werburge counsell
Asyng hym after / her swete ghostly doctryne
The clere exsamples / as we afore dyd tell
Werburge. h.i.

Mooued his conscience / to ghostly dyscipline
With suche contricyon / by specyall grace deuynne
That all bayne pleasures / and honours transytory
Were clere expulsed / and put out of memoꝝ.

This kynge refused / his septre and crowne
Clothes of Tythew / and purpull full royall
With ryches / lybertes / pleasures / possessyon
For the loue of Ihesu / in herte pryncypall
And for the meryte / of his soule helthe withall
So whan he had reygned / nyne and twenty yere
He chaunged his habyte / sayth the story clere.

At a relyggyous place / nomynate Bardenay
In Lyncolne shyre / vnder his domynyon
Senguler byloued / of hym alway
Desyred the habyte / with meke supplicacyon
And was receyued / professynge relyggon
Euer after to obserue / the essencys the
Obedyence / chastyte / and wylfull pouerte.

He assygned his crowne / and temporall dygnyte
Unto prynce Henrede / his brother sone
As true enherytour / to haue regalyte
For in pure obedyence / prayer and medytacyon
Ethelrede encreased / with seruient deuocyon
And as declareth / wylliam of Malurysbury
After was made abbot / of the sayd monastery.

¶ The holy conuersacyon of kynge Henred brother to
saint Werburge / & how he refused his crowne / and was
made monke at Rome / & ther departed a holy cōfessour.
Ca. xxii.

So whan kynge Etheldrede / by heuently grace
At Bardenay abbay / professed relygion
Than prynce Kenrede / his successour was
And toke the Empryre / the septr and the crowne
With moche worthyp / royalte / and renowne
As nerte of inherytaunce / by law naturall
To be kynge of Mercyens / by dyscent lynyall.

This noble kynge Kenrede / replete with vertu
Brother to Werburge / obserued truly
The commaundmentes of god / & his lawes moost tru
Obedyent to our sauyour / and lorde almyghty
Loued holy chyrche / moost tenderly
Mynystred Justyce / to his subiectes all
Mercyfull to the poore / pyteous and lyberall.

In all his realme / was no dyuersyte
Malyce was subdued / rancour and debate
Vertue encreased / true loue and charyte
Envy was exyled / and all pryuy hate
Thefte / murthur / robbery / were founde at no gate
True men myght lyue / without beacyon
Pollers / promoters / had no domynacyon.

He gaue to our sauyour / and bysshop Egwyn
For ghosly meryte / with moche honour
Of tenementes and landes / playnely to determyne
Within worceturshyre .iiii. score and foure
To maynteyne the monastery / spoken of before
Gresham vpon Auen / byfore lawfull wytnes
As the legende of Egwyn / truly dothe expres.

Werburge.

b.ii.

To the courte of Rome / kynge Kenred went
So dyd Offa kynge / of the east Saxons
Also bysshop Egiwyn / by one assent
Deuoutly to byspte / all the hole stacyons
Of the cytee of Rome / with humble supplicacyons
Thankynge our lorde / of his mercy
Hath them preserued / and all theyr company.

This holy bysshop / and kynge Kenrede
Offered to our holy father / pope boneface
With mekenes deuocyon / for ghostly mede
Afore his collage / wytnes in that case
The foresayd monastery / and relygyous place
Frome that day euer after / to be clerely exempte
To the popes holynes / immediatly obedyent.

When they had optayned / perfyte expedycon
Of all theyr bulles / after theyr entent
They toke lycence / and had the popes beneson
And towarde Englade / retourned and went
Praysynge our lorde / with herte and loue feruent
For theyr good spede / and prosperous Journey
Preserued in good helthe / all to theyr countray.

After all this done / Kenrede the sayd kynge
Commaunded to be had / a counseyll generall
By letters myssyue / his peeres and lordes cytynge
Shortly to be present / with hym one and all
As well the spyrytualte / as the temporall
The Seyn was kepte / at a place called Alue
And thyder assembled / his prelates of degre.

Berthunaldus / the archebysshop of Canturbury
 The archbysshop of yorke / called Wylfryde
 With bysshops / suffreganes / archdekenes many
 Dukes / erles / barons / bpon euery tyde
 Kryghtes / esquyers / and comunes that tyde
 Were redy to knowe / the kynges mynde and pleasure
 Well ordred in place / and scyence kepte sure.

This glorpyous Henrede / crowned with golde
 Clothed in purpull / rose bp fro his place
 After due salutacyon / the cause mekely he tolde
 Why he for them sende / and wherfore it was
 That they shulde testyfy / with hym in this case
 What landes he gaue / towarde the fundacyon
 Of the sayd monastery / with grete deuocyon.

And how for that abbay / he went to Rome
 And made the place subiecte / immediatly
 To our father boniface / and gate an exemptyon
 For euer to remayne / to the sayd monastery
 With pardons and pryuyleges / there redde openly
 And many other benefytes / of great commodyte
 Wryten in theyr grauntes / who lyst them to se.

Requyringe the lordes / spyrytuall and temporall
 To graunte to the same / with good entent
 And it to confyme / and roborate specyall
 With charters and dedes / and seales patent
 To whole petycyon / they dyd all consent
 Made confymacyons / and grauntes them amonge
 With a terrible sentence / who dothe the place wronge.

Werburge.

h.iii.

kynge Henrede confyderynge / the great holyntes
Of his noble parentes / his vncles euerychone
Theyr royall progeny / the sufferaunt goodnes
From this lyfe transytory / to heuen agone
Namely the vertue / and feruent deuocyon
Of his syster Ellerburge / and his aintes all
Moued his mynde / to seke for lyfe eternall.

And as saynt Bede sayth / whan this noble kyng
Had reigned fyue yere / in great prosperyte
He forsoke this worlde / and chaunged his lyuynge
Refusynge his crowne / septr / and dygnyte
All bayne honours / ryches and regalyte
And made his vncles sone / prynce Coelrede
To take his empyre / after hym to succede.

So with all gentylmes / and humylyte
The kyng of his subiectes / toke leue specyall
Commendynge his people / to the trynyte
Them to conserue / spyrityuall and temporall
Of his departurre / dolorous were they all
Thus for the loue / of our sauourre
He refused this worlde / pleasures and honoure.

And went to Rome agayne / the yere of grace
Seuen hundredeth and eyght / by full computacyon
Alyfytynge the flacyons / frome place to place
There was professed / to saynt Benettes relyggon
Used bygyls / fastynges / prayer / medytacyon
Where this holy monke / frome this lyfe transytory
With vertu departed / to eternall glory.

Of y^e feruent & ghostly deuocyon of saynt Werburge
& vertuous gouernaunce of her places / & of y^e great humi-
lite she bled to her sisters / & al other creatures. Ca. xliii.

This venerable Werburge / & moynes gracious
for her great vertue / and perfyte holynesse
Electe to be gouernour / ouer the nonnes relygeous
By her uncle kynge Ethelrede / of his goodnesse
Duer dyuers monasteryes (as is sayd) expresse
Was consecrate abbesse / and lady gracious
By the bysshop of Lycheselde / nomynat Serwulfus.

And thus she departed / fro the hous of Ely
Wherin she bled / heuently medytacyon
With lycence optayned / in mynde sad and heuy
So were the sisters / and all the congregacyon
Of her departure / knowynge her conuersacyon
But as wolde charyte / they had great gladnes
Knowynge by her vertue / relygion to encres.

The spouses of Ihesu / and floure of benygnyte
Consyderynge her selfe / a lady and presydent
Ordered her monasteryes : ryght well and wysele
Receyued in sisters / chast / humble / obedyent
Duer them made rulers / vertuous / and pacient
Her subiectes to instructe / and counseill day and nyght
Vertue to exalte / and vyce depreue aryght.

This noble abbesse / remembrynge her duty
What charge it is / to rule a congregacyon
Humble requyred the grace of god almyghty
And dyligently prepared / to supple her towne.

Pryncypally she gaue / to them euerychone
Perfyte exsample / of vertue in her dede
With vertuous doctryne / the same to procede.

A myrrour of mekenesse / she was to them all
A floure of chastyte / and well of clennes
The fruyte of obedyence / in her was specyall
Refusynge bayne pleasures / honours and ryches
Content with lytell / an exsample of lowlynes
As dothe belonge / vnto wyllfull pouerte
Byde ha no resydence / but all humylyte.

She was a mynyster / rather than a maystres
Her great premyence / caused no presumption
She was a handmayd / rather than a pyores
Seruyng her systers / with humble subieccion
Subduyng her body / to penaunce and affliccion
Subiecte to the soule / as reason wolde shulde be
A true sacryfyce / offered to the trynyte.

It was no merueyll / tho all her couent
Under suche a ruler / encreased in vertu
Seynge her exsample / afore them dayly present
Euer augmentynge / thowhe the helpe of Ihesu
Worldly desyres / she clerely dyd subdue
She neuer ware lynnyn / by day or by nyght
All ryche bayne bestures / she set by them but lyght.

In prayer medytacyon / the tyme she dyspent
Proued : for euery nyght / longe afore matyns
She wolde bypyle / at an houre conuenient
And deuoutely say / afore our lordes presens

Dauid spalter holly knelynge / with great reuerence
Or that her sytters / came to the oratory
To say dyurne seruyce / fyndyng her all redy.

At after matyng / the bled contemplacyon
Contynually abydyng / vnto the day lyght
Prostrate on the grounde / or knelyng in deuocyon
Weepyng full tenderly / with teeres downeryght
Many holy praysons / the sayd day and nyght
Piteous / mercyable / and full of charyte
To the poore people / in theyr necessitye.

This lady obserued / suche sharpe abstaynence
That one dayly repast / wolde her well suffice
Delicate dytche meates / were put out of her presence
So nature were content / in moost humble wyse
The Worde of god / was moost delicate seruyce
Fyndyng moche more / the soule to satisfye
Than please and content / her enemy the body.

These sayd examples / with many other mo
Pleasaunte vnto Ihesu / she taught her couent
Them to preserue / frome theyr mortall fo
By synguler vertue / grace to augment
Her precepte and lyuyng / were euer correspondent
She neuer commaunded syster / do any thyng
But it was fulfilled / in her owne doynge.

She exorted her chyldren / euer to deuocyon
With manyfolde doctrynes / ydenes to excheue
Lyke a tender mother / had pyte and compassyon
She dayly fedde them / and nourysshed in all vertue
Merburge. i.i.

And dyligently prayed / our sauour Ihesu
Them to prelerue / of his infynyte grace
Frome peryll of perisynge / in blysse to se his face.

Also the .xii. degrees / of humylyte
Pacyence / quyetnes / and great perfeccyon
Were well obserued / with true loue and charyte
Amonge her systers / the hole congregacyon
And the thre essencys / of relygyon
Wylfull pouerte / chastyte / and obedyence
were truly fulfilled / proued by the consequence.

As for a pastyme / amonge her systers all
She caused to be redde / auordynge ydlenesse
The swete legendary / for a memoryall
And Citas patrum / the wyng great swetenesse
With other narracyons / of grace and goodnesse
Ofttymes to her couent / she had a comyn sayenge
Please god and loue hym / and doubte ye nothyng.

All reders excuse me / tho I can not expresse
For lacke of lernynge / the vertues morall
The hye perfeccyon / and proued holynesse
Of this pure byrgyn / and sanctymonyall
Wherwith was decorate / her lyfe monestycall
Manyfest With myracles / by meryte of her mekenesse
As the true hystory / playnly dothe expresse.

The worthy myracles / of this byrgyn pure
Dylated were / through all this regyon
By deuyne sufferauce / aboue nature
Profytable / to euery chrysten synguler persone

In sekeneſſe / trouble / peyne or beracyon
Of her they haue refuge / helpe / and ſocoure
By her merytes / and prayer / that euery honoure.

Her merytes were / moche more commendable
Than were her myracles / manifeſt and playne
For why by her merytes / famous and notable
Sygnes and myracles / were ſhewed full playne
In the houſe of Ely / by the grace of our ſufferayne
And in euery place / where ſhe kepte reſydence
Of whome parte ſolowen / in this rude ſentence.

¶ How at Medon wyld gees were pynned by her com
maundymment / & alſo releſhed & put at lyberte. Ca. xxiij.

This holy byrgyn / whan ſhe dwelled at Medon
In Northamptonſhyr / with a deuoute couent
Whiche place ſomtyme / was the kynges manſyon
Tranſlated to an abbay / by her commaundymment
A myracle was done / by this noble preſydent
As the true legende / playnly dothe vs ſay
And all the inhabytauntes / vnto this preſent day.

A great multytude / ſomtyme of wyld gees
Comunely called Gauntes / made a great deſcrypcyon
Upon her landes / paſtures / waters / and feldeſ
Deuourynge the cornes / and fruytes of Medon
Greuous to her ſubiectes / within that poſſeſſyon
The people coude fynde / no ſufficyent remedy.
But ſhe wed theyr complaynte / to Werburge theyr lady.

Whan Werburge had herde / this greuous complayne
Werburge. l. ii.

How the cornes were wasted / y^e ternautes hurte therby
Her herte was moeued / with charyte than certayne
To saue her fruytes / and helpe her company
Therefore she commaunded a seruaunt go hastely
To dyue those wyld gees / & bynge home to her place
There to be pynned / and purysshed for theyr trespase.

The messanger merueyled / and mused in his mynde
Of this straunge message / stode styll in a study
Knowynge it well / it passed course of kynde
Wyld gees for to pynne / by any mannes polycy
Syth nature hath ordeyned / suche bydes to fly
Supposynge his lady / had ben vnreasonable
Commaundynge to do / a thyng vnpossyble.

With wordes of conforte / she sayd to hym agayne
Go in my name / do my commaundment
The seruaunt went forth / thynkyng all but vayne
Unto the foldes / where the bydes were lent
And sayd his message / with mynde and good entent
My lady commaundes you / bydes euerychone
Afore me to go / vnto her proper mansyone.

A merueylous thyng / transcendynge nature
Unto his wordes / the gees were obedyent
Not one departed / fro thens ye may besure
Of all the nombre / that there were present
Towarde her place / afore hym they went
Meekely / as yf they had reason naturall
Unto her presence / he brought the gautes all.

Wreddefully daryng / comen now they be

They wynges traylynge / entred into the hall
for great confusyon / after they kynde and propre
mournyng in theyr maner / abydyng one and all
Her wyll and Judgme[n]t / with mercy specyall
Lamentyng all nyght / there in captiuyte
Tyll the morowe after / withouten lyberte.

All that same nyght / Werburge dyd contynue
In deuoute prayes / and ympnes celestyall
After her olde custome / bled in all bertue
In the mornynge after / the bydes that were thall
With hye voyces (as yf it were) on her dyd call
for grace and pardon / of theyr offence
And of departure / to haue fre lycence.

Chan the full pyteous / to euery creature
Upon these bydes harynge compassyon
Delyuered them / frome all daunger and cure
frely to departe / vnder this condycyon
That none of them / vpon the lordshyp of Medon
Shulde make destruccyon / nor lyght by any way
On cornes or fruytes / neuer after that day.

Neuertheles a seruaunt / one of the gees dyd take
And pryuely hydde it / agaynst iustyce and ryght
Unknowynge to Werburge / suche bybye to make
The bydes departed / moost glad to take theyr flyght
from theyr tender Judge / but whan they sawe in syght
One of theyr felawes / taken frome theyr company
The sayd great nombre / of gees retourned hastely.

They flewe ouer / this blessed byrgyns hall
Werburge.

i.iii.

flournyng and waylyng / after they entent
And wolde not departe / but fast on her dyd call.
yet they durst not lyght / for drede of her comaundment
But in theyr maner & kynde they sayd / o swete presydent
Why suffer ye suche wychednes / done for to be
Anendes our felawe / agaynst all ryght and charyte.

Merburge went fyrst / to knowe wherfore and why
These bydes retourned / so hastely certayne
By grace she perceyued / the cause of it truly
And tryed out the truthe / of all the mater playne
She restaured the byde / to his selyshyp agayne
And gaue them a lesson / or they went her fro
How they shulde prayse / theyr maker and sufferayne
Sayenge (benedicite bolucres celi domino)

But as Wyllyam Maluysbury / sheweth expresse
The goos that was taken / and stolen afore away
Was rosted and eten / the same nyght doubtlesse
So whan it was asked / for hyon the other day
The bare bones were brough / after this lady betray
And there by the vertue / of her benedycyon
The byde was restaured / and flewe away full soone.

Certaynly frome that tyme / vnto this present day
As all the people knowe / dwellynge about Medon
The foresayd wyld gees / attempten by no way
To hurte theyr fruytes / ne lyght in that possessyon
No merueyll it is / remembryng the deuocyon
And true loue she had / to god onmyppotent
For vnto vertue / all thyng is obedyent.

C How a tyrant without pyte punyſhyng an Inno-
cent was punyſhed / & after made hole. Ca.rrb.

Further to declare / the pacyence and humylyte
And the ſynguler grace / grounded in this abbas
As in the true legende / playnly ye may ſe
We ſhall parte rehers / to augment your ſolas
Merburge had a ſeruaunte / whiche named was
Alnotus a man / of meke conuerſacion
Knownen by his merytes / after due probacion.

Alſo a baylyſe ſhe had / a cruell tyrant
Whiche pyteouſly punyſhed / without reaſon
And wounded greuouſly / Alnot her ſeruaunt
Without any greuaunce / at the place of Medon
Merburge for pyte / and great compaſſyon
Afore this captyſe / kneled on her knee
Prayenge hym to ceaſe / for loue of the trynpte.

Sayenge why does thou punyſſhe / this innocent
Causeles without mercy / whiche I hyleue playne
Is more acceptable / to our lorde omnyppotent
Than many other be / for his mekenelle certayne
The baylyſe at her prayer / wolde not refrayne
But punyſhed hym ſtyll / in his fury and pryde
Tyll the vengaunce of god / fell on hym that tyde.

Incontynente his heed / his necke / and his face
Were tourned backward / lyke a perſone monſtruous
Contrary to nature / for his great trespaece
Crucpate with ſorowe / and peynes hyduous
Contynually encreaſynge / to beholde pyteous
Merburge. i.iiii.

At the last remembered / of the best remedy
Fell prostrate to the fete / of Werburge his lady.

And cryed vpon her / with wofull chere
Weepyng / lamentyng / his great iniquyte
My louely lady / and maystres moost dere
Helpe me swete abbesse / in this necessyte
I haue offended god / now pray for me
And I wyll neuer / enduryng all my lyfe
Dysplease no more / man / mayde / ne wyfe.

When Werburge considered / his great contricyon
His wofull herte / and lamentable crye
Vpon hym she had / tender compassyon
Beholdyng his greuaunce / and tender agony
Good brother she sayd / who so wyll haue mercy
Must be mercyable / as in prouerbe wyten is
Who is without mercy / of mercy shall mys.

Call vnto mynde / thy owne wyched dede
In punysshynge this poore man / without offence
To se his punysshment / my herte sore dyd blede
I kneled afore thy fete / desyryng indulgence
Thou toke no regarde / to my prayer ne presence
Wherefore the Justyce / of god almyghty
Vpon the is fallen / for thy synne todayly.

When she had ended / her ghosly exortacyon
Perceyvyng hym penytent / with great humylyte
Gladde to amende / byce and transgressyon
Anone vnto prayer / she went with charyte
Optyened forgyuenesse / of the blessed trynpte

His fylnamy / restaured to his kynde agayne
Bothe bodyly and ghoſtly / cured was certayne.

This foreſayd Alnotus / by ſingular grace
Refuſed this worlde / pleasures and banp̃te
Went vnto wyldernesſe / and machop̃te was
Whome theues martyred / to heuen blyſſe went he
At Stow beſyde Bukbyd̃ge / buryed was trule
For whome our lorde / of his inſp̃ryte goodnes
Shewd many myracles / affyrmyng his holynes.

¶ How dyuers prynces folowynge ſensualyte inten-
dyng to violate this byrgyn bi power / bi myracle were
put to confuſyon. Ca. xxvi.

Another ſygne was ſhewd / by the kyng of blys
Of a wanton pryncce / folowynge ſensualyte
And his fragyll appetyte / in doyng amys
Entendynge by vyolence / power / and auctoryte
To dep̃ryue Werburge / of her byrgynp̃te
Eſpyed a ſeaſon / to fulfyll his entent
Whan ſhe was ſolitary / and no man there preſent.

By force than he began / this mayd to aſſayle
But ſhe truſtyng in god / to be her protectour
Eſcapynge his preſence / caſt her ſacrat bayle
For lyghtneſſe and eaſe / to fle from the traytour
The ſonne beame receyued it / whiche haged that houre
Whiche myracle ſene / the pryncce fledde away
The byrgyn was preſerued / by grace that day.

¶ Another myracle / was done in Kent

In the byllage of Hoo / yet full memorous
A sensuall prynce / of wyched consent
Purposed to maculate / this byrgyn glorvous
Consyderynge her persone / so fayre and beauteous
Carped the season / to fynde her solytary
By power to oppresse / this gracypous lady.

¶ When the tyme was comen / he thought conuenient
After her furpously / he ranne a fast pace
She knowynge his mynde / add vnchast entent
Seynge no remedy / by man in that place
Called to our sauoure / for his helpe and grace
Sayenge blessed lorde / for thy endles pyte
Defende me this daye / and saue my chastyte.

And as she fledde / frome this cruell persone
She ranne for socour / to a great oke tree
By grace the sayd tree / opened that same season
Sufferynge this mayd / to haue sure and fre entree
¶ Therby she escaped his / wyched tyrannye
¶ Whiche tree to this day / endurynge all the yere
By myracle is bernaunte / freshe / grene / and clere.

Of the sayd oke tree / is a famous oppynyon
That no man may entre / the sayd concaupyte
In deedly synne bounden / without contrycyon
But in clene perfyte lyfe / who soeuer he be
May entre the sayd oke / with fre lyberte
And rygh to that place / a chyrche is now dedycate
In the honour of god / and werburge immaculate.

¶ Many other myracles / our blessed sauour

Shewed for this byrgyn / of his goodnes
Conforte to the people / in sekenes and langour
That to her wyll seke / in theyr dyffresse
Her excellent vertue / and great holynesse
By sygnes and myracles / were dayly manifest
To many a creature / with peynes opprest.

The same wherof sprange / to fast aboute
Notyfied playne / in all this regyon
The people approached / withouten doubte
To knowe her blessed / and holy conuersacyon
And of these myracles / to haue probacyon
By the syght wherof / they myght all glorify
With ioy and gladnesse / our lorde god almyghty.

There was no sekenesse / nor infyrmyte
That mankynde had / nor beracyon
But by her prayer / and humylyte
Makynge for them / to our lorde intercessyon
They were restaured / to helthe and saluacyon
All by the mercyte / of this byrgyn pure
A synguler refuge / vnto euery creature.

To the dombe was gyuen / speche and language
To blynde theyr syght / to defe theyr herynge
To halte and lame people / helthe in euery aege
By deuynne grace / and her ghostly luryng
The people approchynge / nygh to her in dwellynge
By callynge to her / in the name of Ihesu
Had theyr petrycyon / by her synguler vertu.

Some other that were / fully possessed

With wretched spyrytes / berynge the mynde
 Of with sekenes incurable / myserably greued
 By her dayly prayer / aboue course of kynde
 Of theyr displeases / they shulde remedy fynde
 And from her departe / in soule with gladnesse
 Whiche to her came / soye in peyne and wretchednes.

¶ How saynt Werburge gaue knowledge to her systers
 of her departure & how she ordered i vertue her sayd mo
 nasteryes afore her dethe. Ca. xxvii.

¶ His blessed abbesse / and vertuous floure
 The well of clenness / and humplyte
 Called to mynde / the wordes of our sauyour
 Reherled by Mathewe / in his euangely
 The vyctory all crowne / of eterne glory
 Is gyuen to them / that be redy eche houre
 Wyfely attendynge / whan they be sende fore.

This texte was euer / in her memoryall
 Prompte alway redy / as a true spouses
 To waite on her spouse / whan he wyll call
 Her lampe replete / with oyle of mekenes
 Synguler gyftes / she had of chrystes goodnes
 Inspyred with the spyryte / of prophecy
 Secrete thynges to come / knowynge therby.

She knewe the season / was hastely comynge
 Of her departure / fro this lyfe mortall
 Wherefore she ordred / sadly euery thyng
 Within her monasteryes / and charges spyrytuall
 Wpytyng her couent / with her presence personall

Gaue knowlege to them / that soone and haffely
She shulde departe / frome this lyfe transytory.

Afore her were called / the systers of yche place
And were apoynted / who shulde succede
After to be gouernour / ruler / and abbesse
To the pleasure of god / and theyr ghostly mede
Specyally commendynge / vertue as we rede
What meryte they shall haue / of god almyghty
In spyrtyuall cures / that done well theyr duty.

All other offycers / within eche monastery
Were assigned by Werburge / theyr presydent
And vnder obedyence / charged full depely
Theyr offyce to execute / vertue to augment
For the synguler profyte / of all the couent
She gaue to yche place / landes and posseltyon
Suffycently to serue / all the congregacyon.

When she had ordeyned / eche place in charyte
Dischargynge her conscyence / chargynge them all
To obserue relyggon / with perfyte humylyte
After her exemple / and doctryne pryncypall
She had perfyte knowlege / by grace supernaturall
Her body shulde rest / in the place of Hamburgens
After her departure / by deupne prouydens.

Wherefore she commaunded / the couent of Hambury
Wysely to attende / with all theyr dyligence
Upon the ende / of her lyfe transytory
Wheresoeuer it be / to come with benyvolence
And incontynent take / her body with reuerence

And brynge it shortly / into the monastery
There to be tynplate / after her desyder.

As it pleaseth our lorde / and celestyall sufferayne
To sende to his seruaunte / his bysytacyon
The day was apoynted / the houre incertayne
Of her departure / frome worldly veracyon
The messanger of dethe / the ende of trybulacyon
Oppressed this lady / moost worthy fame
Ryght at her monastery / nomynat Trentame.

She thanked her maker / sayenge day and nyght
Well come be the bysytacyon / of god almyghty
She called her systers / present afore her syght
Her entente reherlynge / to them tenderly
Desyrynge all them / to folowe dyligently
The lawes of god / with honour and reuerence
And to her counseyll / to gyue fully credence.

Sayenge dere blyoued systers / in our sauyour
O spyrtyuall chyldren / my derlynges moost dere
Whiche haue refused / all worldly honour
To serue our lorde / with herte and mynde clere
Suffer no synne / in your soule to apere
But wasshe it away / by bytter contrycyon
With prayer penance / and true confessyon.

And trust ye well your true obedyence
your chaste lyuynge / and wysfull pouerte
your dayly prayers / bygylls / and abstinence
That ye haue obserued / her vnder me
Shalbe recompensed / a thousande folde tride

When ye shalbe taken / fro this lyfe transytory
your rewarde shalbe / with immortall glory.

As for my dethe / whiche approaches nere
I dede nothyng / tho nature ferefull be
I knowe for certayne / who departeth well here
Is newe borne agayne / to Joye and felcpe
The chrysten man hath / a threfolde natyure
First of his parentes / by cours of nature
Borne to many troubles / and sorowes sure.

By the seconde byrthe / whiche is more excellent
At fonte of baptysm / we haue regeneracyon
By fayth professed / to god omnyppotent
And made the chylde / of ghostly saluacyon
To auoyde by grace / all wyched temptacyon
To be inherytours / of Joy perpetuall
Followinge the counsell / of holy chyrche withall.

The thyrde byrthe / moost ferefull and to be dedde
Is when the soule / departeth fro the body
To payne or blyse / and leues the corps dedde
To tourne agayne to erthe / to wast and putryfy
In this thyrde byrthe / by callynge aserre for mercy
Our soule shall lyue in blyse / euerlastyng
Crowned with vitory / for our chaff lyvynge.

The swete byrde closed / in a cage a longe season
Gladly entendeth / to fly at lyberte
The prysoner fettered / and cast in depe dongeon
Euer supposes / to be rydde frome capturyte
The soule of mankynde / moost degne of durtpe

Naturally desyneth / proued by reason
To be deliuered / frome bodily pryson.

T Of y^r ghosli exortacyon saynt Werburge made to her
systers in her sekenesse / and how deuoutely she receyued
y^r sacramētes of holy chyrche byfore her deth. Ca. xxviii.

T He day knowen / to her by reuelacyon
Of her departure / by sygnes euident
She sende for all / the hole congregacyon
And in presence / of all her holy couent
She called for the blessed sacrament
To whome she sayd / with wordes expresse
With wepyng teeres / and great mekenesse.

Well come my lorde / well come my kynge
Well come my sufferayne / and sauyour
Well come my conforte / and ioy euerlastyng
My trust / my treasure / my helpe and socour
Well come my maker / and my redemptour
The sone of god / moost in maieste
Withouten begynnynge / and endeles shalbe.

I beleue that thou / for all mankynde
Frome heuen descended / of thy charpte
And was incarnate / scripture dothe mynde
In the bygynall wombe / of blessed marpe
And suffered dethe / to make vs all fre
Descended to hell / roose the thyde day
Ascended to heuen / and our raunson dyd pay.

And I knowlege to the / with pure entent

On Shrophthursday / after thy passion
Thy moost blessed body / in sacrament
Thou gaue to vs / for our communyon
To be our defence / and ghosly turycon
Now present here / in forme of breed
To Judge mankynde / bothe quyrke and deed.

O sufferayne sauyour / replete with grace
I the beseeche / haue pyte vpon me
And in my soule / make a dwellynge place
Expulce all vyce / synne and mysery
Defende my soule / frome our aduersary
Saue and protecte me / from peynes infernall
And brynge through thy mercy / to ioye perpetuall

Thus with reuerence / and great humylyte
She receyued / the blessed sacrament
The seconde persone / in trynyte
In perfyte fayth / hope / and loue feruent
With great contricyon / as it was apparent
Her herte lyfte vp / towarde heuen on hye
Abydynge the wyll / of god almyghty.

She exorted / her systers euerychone
That were there present / in companye
Besyrnge them all / with supplicacyon
To remembre her / sayenge with humylyte
My systers in god / now knowe may ye
My dayes ben ferre past / comynge is the houre
Wherefore I betake you / fyrst to our sauyour.

Prayenge you tenderly / for the loue of me
Wierburge.

k.i.

In deuyne scrupce / loke ye contynu
Obserynge pacyence / mekenes / and chastyte
Encresynge in relygyon / by the grace of Ihesu
Who so perceuers / in herte and mynde true
Under obedyence / to the extreme day
Is sure to be saued / scripture so doth say.

Also remembre / that all worldly royalte
Honour / ryches / pleasure / possessyon
If ye consyder / are but a vanyte
Nothyng assured / to trust therupon
Wherefore dyspose you / to vertue alon
Whyle ye endure / in this lyfe mortall
Tyll that ye come / to Joy perpetuall.

Secondly she sayd / systers I you pray
Kept well the order / of perfyte charyte
Neuer declynyng / fro it by no way
As ye haue taken / exemple of me
Iche loue other / and worshyp in theyr degre
So that no murmure / nor dysstylacyon
Be founde amonge / this holy congregacyon.

Be euer lowly / humble / and obedyent
With due reuerence / worshyp and honoure
Followe the mynde / of your presydent
Unto your heed / and ghostly gouernoure
Kepe well chastyte / that precyous flour
So that no thought / of sensualityte
Corrupte your mynde / to breke bygynyte.

Se that ye vse / dyscrete temperaunce

Absterynge frome bayne superfluyte
Se that amonge you / be founde no barypance
Kepe well the degrees / of humylyte
These and many other / examples of charyte
She taught her couent / of synguler deuocyon
How they shulde optayne / to hye perfeccyon.

Thyrdly she prayed / sayenge with mynde delygent
O blessed sauyour / I desyre the
Saue and defende / my hole couent
And theyr monasteryes / of thy great pyte
Frome peryll of peryshynge / and frome enmyte
That all the subiectes / of our congregacyon
May well obserue / theyr holy professyon.

And graunt me swete lorde / throwe thy goodnes
Who so in thy name / vpon me dothe call
In langour / mylery / in payne / or sekenes
Also women with chylde / in paynes thall
May haue remedy / and helpe specciall
And people in pryson / halte / blynde / and lame
By me may magnify / thy glorious name.

Than she requyred / with humylyte
The spyrytuall sufferage / of holy vnccyon
Her soule to conforste / frome all aduersyte
She toke her leue / and kyssed them pcheon
Alas what herte / myght she we the lamentacyon
The wepyng / waylyng / and wofull heurnes
At the departure / of theyr swete maystres.

¶ Of the departure of saynt Werburge into heuē at the
Werburge. k.ii.

abbay of Trentam / fro this myserable lyfe / & what lamentacyon her sytters made for her dethe. Ca.xxix.

In all her infyrmte / peyne and busynesse
She vsed prayer / and medytacyon
Callynge for mercy / by interyor mekenesse
With wepyng eyes / and great lamentacyon
Remembryng in herte / our lordes passyon
Commendynge her couent / vnto our sauyour
To be theyr defence / ayde / and protectour.

The peynes encreased / of her infyrmte
The panges doubled / her peyne to augment
Nature decayed / vnto such debylte
That the sygnes of dethe / appered euident
The houre approached / after all Iudgment
Wherefore all thynges / were redy preparate
As was conuenient / for so noble a state.

Her spouse Ihesus / hauynge pyte and cure
Upon his spouses / in extreme dystresse
Wolde not suffer her peyne / longer endure
But sende his angels / with great lyghtnesse
To conforthe his seruaunt / in peyne and sekenesse
To dyssolue her wo / and great penalte
And bynge by her soule / to eterne felycyte.

There darknes was tourned / all vnto lyght
Langour and trouble / vnto prosperyte
The day was gouernour / ouer the nyght
When that she passed / this lyfe transytory
Bondage and thraldome / were brought to lyberte
The tyme of Joye / and euerlastynge pleasure

Was appocheinge to Werburge / euer to endure.

A multitude of angelles / bynyng moost clere
Were redy to gyde / with humble reuerence
The soule of werburge / as truly dyd apere
And brought it to blys / into the hye presence
Of almyghty god / moost of magnyfyce
Clerelely releashed / frome peynes of purgatory
To be rewarded / with euerlastyng glozy.

This blessed byrgyn / glorpyous and pure
In stedfast fapth / hope / loue / and charyte
The thyde day of february / ye may be sure
Expyred frome this lyfe / caduce and transytory
To eterne blyss / coronate with vitory
Chaungyng her lyfe / myserable and thral
For infynyte ioye / and glozy eternall.

With moche honour / these spyrytuall mynysters
Conueyed the soule / aboue the firmament
Passyng the seuen planettes / and all the sterres
Unto the presence / of god omnyppotent
Synngyng full swetely / theyr tonges equybalent
Of pleasaunt armony / of conforte and blys
Salutyng her mekely / with wordes reuerent
Amen dilecta : amen coronabis.

The thre Hierarches / were redy present
With heuently melody / to receyue this monyall
The quere of byrgyns / mette her incontynent
With great solemnyte / and processyon royall
Presentyng her soule / with myrthes angelycall
To Ihesu her spouse / to whome he sayd truly
Werburge.

k.iii.

Well come dere doughter / to blyffe celestypall
Intra in gaudium : domui tui.

In meane tyme and space / this venerable body
(The soule departed) lay whyte / streyght and colde
Semyng as on slepe / she had ben berely
With swete odours fragrant / passyng manyfolde
All spyrtes and herbes / in erth may be tolde
The place was so pleasaunt / full of delyce
Lyke as it had ben / an erthly paradyce.

This forsayd venerable congregacyon
With wepyng teeres / and syghes lamentable
Washed the swete body / after the olde custome
And dressed the corps / with clothes honorable
Prepared all necessaryes / pleasaunt and commendable
To church she was brought / solemply in lyght
With feruent deuocyon / to be watched all nyght.

And as they watched / with due mynystracyon
Ouer the sayd corps / deuoutly prayenge
They made great mournynge / and lamentacyon
Euerychone to other / for her departynge
Alas they all sayd / with wofull waylyng
Our solace / our helthe / is clere gone away
Alas for sorowe / what shall we now say.

The sterre of our conforste / is extyncte clere
The lanturne of our lyght / is taken vs fro
The floure of chastyte / is layd vpon a bere
The myrrour of mekenes / now lyeth full loo
The treasure of relygion / from us now is ago
Our sorowe encrefed / wretchednes / and misery

Syth thou arte departed / alas what remedy :

**Dur hertes ben plunged / in great wo and peyne
Dur myndes are medled / with heuy langour
How shulde we now rest / frome mornynge certayne
Beholdynge now deed / whylom our protectour
Swete lady thou art gone / frome vs for euermore
Dur deedly sorowe / replete with bytternes
For waylynge and wepyng / can neuer ceas.**

**With herte mynde and boyce / to the we do call
O blessed Werburge / our moost dere maystres
O sufferayne lady / and ruler of vs all
Why haste thou vs lefte / in suche heuynesse
If thy wyll had ben / it is knowen expresse
Thou myght haue tarped / with vs by petcyon
Alas remedyleffe / is our lamentacyon**

**frome vs thou arte taken / and gone is our solace
The myrrour of vertue / is deed now with the
The tryed flock of truth / and the grounde of grace
Is pyteously decayed / our hope and sufferaynte
O blessed sauyour / bpon vs haue pyte
Sende vs our conforste / by thy great myght agayne
As thou haste reysed many / from dethe to lyfe certayne.**

**O dedefull dethe / cruell enemy to nature
With dolefull heuynes / on the we may complayne
Takyng our heed frome vs / to our great dyscomfytur
Hath brought vs to thraldome / wofulnes and peyne
Nothyr kyng ne emperour / thy sauour may optayne
But he must departe / arested with thy launce.**

Chanke we god of all / for it is his pleasure.

T Now the hamburgenses toke the blessed body of Wer-
burge frome Trentam by myracle & brought it to Ham-
bury / & of y^r burpall of werburge / & of manyfolde myra-
cles shewed for her merytes .ix. yere after her trāslacyon.
Ca. lxx.

T His glorious byrgyn / and moost blessed abbace
Departed from this lyfe / caduce and transytory
(As afore is sayd) the yere and tyme of grace
Almoost seven hundredeth / the thyrde day of february
To celestiyall blyss / and infynyte glory
Her subiectes oppressed / with wyllfull pensyueneſſe
With great trybulacyon / care and heuynesse.

But where werburge gaue / in commaundment
To bury her corps / at place of Hambury
As was the wyll / of our lorde omnyppotent
Her subiectes of Trentam / whiche had her body
Purposed her wyll / and entent to deny
Prepared to kepe / the corps by stronge hande
With them to remayne / as ye shall vnderstande.

The sayd people of Trentam / watched full dilygent
Her corps fulfyllynge / the obsequyes funerall
Entendynge to auoyde / and frustrate her testament
Gat a great company / by power Marcyall
Closed fast theyr doores / and gates one and all
Made sure y^e place / by theyr prouydens
For to kepe the corps / excludynge Chamburgens.

But as Salomon sayth / sentencyously

There may be no counseyll / power ne prudence
Wyledome of man / nor naturall polycy
To derogate or chaunge / deuyne sentence
Proued euer day / by true experyence
Tho mankynde prepose / his mynde to fulfyll
yet god dysposeth / all thyng at his wyll.

- And as they watched / the same sayd nyght
stooft busily / to execute they wyll and entent
By deuyne prouydence / passyng mannes nyght
Sodeynly on slepe / was all that content
They company and mynysters / that were there lent
Hauyng no power / for to waken doubtles
God so prouyded / for they great maystres.

Than shortly resembled / vnto that sayd place
The people of Hamburgens / a great company
With the mynysters of god / people full of grace
And anone by the wyll / of our lorde almyghty
The lockes and the barres / of that sayd monastery
fell downe to the grounde / by power supernall
Without mannes hande / that enter they myght all.

Whiche myracle proued / the people of Hambury
Entred Trentam abbay / with mynde reuerent
And founde there on slepe / all the other company
Man / woman / and chyld / all that were present
They kneeled all downe / and worshipped the sacrament
Praysyng our maker / of they good spede
They specyall socour / euer at they nede.

Her blessed body / from Trentam they dyd take
Werburge. Li.

Gladly departynge / out of the monastery
Noether man nor woman / had power to wake
Tyll they were passed / all greuous Jeopardy
Magnifyenge our lord / of his grace deuoutly
Solemply syngyng their songes celestiaall
With infinite gladnes / and comfort spirituall.

After all this done / this holy congregacion
With reuerence / honour / and solempnite
With wepyng tearis / for pure affection
With lamentable songes / masse and dirige
Buried the corps / of this blessed ladie
Right in the chauncell / of the sayd abbay
There bodily to rest / as her wyll was alway.

All obsequies ended / therto belongynge
As was agreable for suche a president
The sisters departed / with clamour and mournynge
Plonged in heuynes / and to their celles went
To wepe and wayle secretly / their hartis to content
Cryng alas alas / nowe buried haue we
The exemple of vertu / mekenes / and chastite.

And as the history of her lyfe / doth expresse
In a boke nominat / the thrid Passiounary
After the buriall of this patronesse
The place was decorat / with myracles many
Manifest to the people / of euery progeny
Howe god almyghty of his speciall grace
Hath done for his seruant / in short tyme and space.

For many people greued with infirmite

**Dolorous of hert / and interiour tribulacion
Peunyes of mynde / or other penalite
To her graue resortyng / with feruent deuocion
Sekyng for remedy / with great contricion
Anon by her prayer / vnto our sauyour
They were released from peyne and langour.**

**Also by her merite suffrage and petition
Euery humble creature had helpe and succour
To distract persons / was yelded reason
Wikked spirites expulsed . were that same hour
Impotent and feble to helth she dyd restour
Halt and lame had passage / the blynde had pfect syght
The dombe had speche / the desse helynge ryght.**

**Women with childe / beyng in great ieopardy
Namely in trauelyng / greued with wo and payne
Whan they myght nat come / sendyng to her oratorye
Makyng true oblacion / restaured were certayne
To helth and prosperite / from wo deliuered playne
And if they obteyned a relique from the place
The mother and childe / by it founde speciall grace.**

**The deuout pilgrym / the perfit maryner
The true laborer / the marchant with richesse
The carefull pore man / the peynfull prisoner
Were sondry tymes deliuered from wo and distresse
Men / women / child / sekynge with mekenes
This glorious virgyn / with humble supplicacion
Founde soone remedie / helpe and consolacion.**

**¶ A litle breue reherfall of her lyfe / and howe for her
Werburge. Lii.**

miracles shewed y^e couent of Hambury purposed to tra
state her body / by the helpe of Mercyens. Ca. cxxi.

This glorrious lady / and gemme of holynesse
Of fyue myghty kynges / descended lynyally
A prynces / an enherytryce / replete with mekenes
Refused all pleasures / pompe / and bayne glory
Entred relyggon / professed at Cly
A spectacle of vertue / dwellynge in that place
And a floure of chastyte / electe by synguler grace.

Her honorable vncl / kyng Ethelede
Contyderynge her vertue / and hye deuocyon
Made her gouernour / for ghostly helthe and mede
Duer all the monasteryes / within his regyon
For the sure encresement / of perfyte relyggon
Foure of these monasteryes / we haue in memory
As Medon / Trentam / Kepton / and Hambury.

Whan she was ruler / and chefe presydent
Of these sayd places / vnder god almyghty
Than vertue and goodnes / dayly dyd augment
By heuenly grace / to the soule helthe of many
And by her exemple / and doctryne ghostly
Kynges / lordes / barons / refusynge theyr royalte
Entred relyggon / with great humylyte.

Her lyfe and doctryne / agreed bothe in one
Proued in effecte / by specyall gyftes of grace
Many she conuerted / into contemplacyon
To prayer and penaunce / whyle they had here space
Her couent and subiectes / within euery place
By her excellent vertue / and hye dyscrecyon

Were gratioſly governed / for theꝝ ſalvation.

Her dwellynge was moſt at the place of Medon
Where many myracles were ſhewed openly
And at Trentam abbay / of her foundation
From payne ſhe departed to eternall glory
After her entent was buried at Hambury
Of whom it may be ſayd / here lyeth nowe preſent
A princeſſe / a virgin / a nonne / and a preſident.

The deuout couent of her congregacion
Whiche hath long wayled / with ſorowfull payne
Nowe haue great cauſe to make conſolacion
And gyue due honour to our lord and ſufferayne
Knowynge that Werburge / in blyſſe is nowe certayne
For them all dayly a true mediatrice
In the heuynly trone / afore the hie Juſtice.

Our ſauour Jeſus / graunter of all goodnes
Conſydering the mekenes / and pure virginite
Of Werburge his ſpouſe / and proued holynes
By ſpeciall grace / preferred her body
To his laude and honour / his name to magnifye
Both hole and ſounde / from naturall reſolucion
As her ſoule was clere from vice and corruption.

This immaculat mayde / ſhynyng more bryght
Than radiant phebus in the triumphant trone
With the quere of virgins / prayſeth day and nyght
The bleſſed trinite with due adoration
Of perpetuall pleaſure hauyng the fruition
A ſingular interceſſour for her ſeruauntes all
Werburge.

Liii.

That here in erth mekely to her wyll call

And though her body do rest nowe in graue
yet notable signes continually be done
Some warned in their slepe comfort to haue
By visityng her place / callynge her vpon
With contrite hert makynge true oblacion.
Whiche thyng continued by space of .ix. yere
With meruailous myracles euident and clere

The couent consyderynge suche great company
from diuers partes / resortynge to theyr place
In pylgrimage to Werburge / for helpe and remedy
Entended to translate this glorious abbasse
To exalte her body replet with great grace
To her great honour / comfort to eche creature
Pite that suche a relique shulde lye in sepulture

To the prayes and honour of god omnipotent
And of saint Werburge laude and reuerence
The couent and the people by one assent
Desired Coelrede than kynge of merciens
for aide in this case / helpe and diligence
(Whiche thyng graunted) the day appointed was
The clergy and the comons reioised with solace

¶ Of the solempne transacion of this glorious virgyn
saint Werburge / and of the great myracles done at the
sayd season by the myght of god and merite of this gra-
cious lady. Cap. xxxii.

At the day appoynted of her transacion

Kynge Coelred and his counsell were redy present
With bysshops and the clergy men of deuocion
Her systers and subiettes a religious couent
The comon people from eche place thider went
With great gladnes / the hole for pleasure goffly
The seke and impotent for helth and remedy

The bysshops and clergy stode vpon one parte
Of her holy graye / and her systers echone
Syngynge and praylynge the blessed trinite
The kyng and his counsell with great deuocion
Stode on the other parte in contemplacion
The graue was opened eleuat was the chest
Wherin her holy corps. ix. yere fully dyd rest

When this sayd monument discovered was
Suche a suauite and fragrant odoure
Ascended from the corps by singular grace
Passyng all worldly swetnes and sauour
That all there present that day and hour
Supposed they had ben / in the felicitye
Of erthely paradise / without ambiguite.

And as eche man throught by naturall reason
Nothyng shulde remayn of that blessed body
But the bare boones / all els to resolucion
The couerture remoued by the sayd clergy
The corps hole and sounde was funde berely
Apperyng to them / on slepe as she had ben
Nothyng depaired / that ther coude be seen.

Her vesture appered hole clere and white
Wierburge. l.iiii.

No parte consumed / for all the longe space
fragrant in odoure / repleit with delite
As at the fyrst season whan she buried was
But whan discovered was her swete face
Beautye appered more white than the lile
Fairt with rose colour / moost faire for to se

Her louely countenannce / so comly to beholde
And her swete slynomy / with fairenes decrat
As freshely apparant / moost pleasant to be tolde
As at the fyrst day / whan she was tumulat
No doubt therof / for she with synne nat maculat
Lifyng all her lyfe in clenres and birginite
From bodily corruption / by grace must saued be.

The clergy yet serchyng more diligently
Her precious body / and interiour besture
Eleuat the corps full reuerently
With moche worchip honour and cure
founde nothyng perished in shap nor figure
for all the long space tyme and contynuaunce
She lay in sepulture by diuine ordynaunce.

Whiche famous myracle / notified so clere
The clergy with her systers in ioy and honour
The kyng and his counsell all therat present were
With voice melodious made a great clamour
Praylyng and magnifyng our blessed sauour
With celestially songes / and hymnes full of blys
Deuoutly reherlyng / with all their deuour
Mirabilis deus in sanctis suis.

With that the comon rude people euerychone
In the sayd churche yarde standyng without
Heryng the clergy syng with suche deuocion
Towarde heuen they cried / and busely dyd shout
The space of .iii. houres / or nere there about
Worshippyng our lord / with voice shrill and loude
In hert wyll and mynde / as well as they coude.

After all this done / her blessed body
Was washed and reclothed with besture precious
By the sayd couent of the place of Hambury
The byshops were reuelshed in pontificalibus
And all the clergy syngyng with voice melodious
Kneled all downe and gaue due reuerence
Honour and worship to her corporall presence.

Thus they receyued with perfit humilite
This sacrat relique hole and substanciall
And layd it in a shryne with great solempnite
Enownded with riches sumptuous and roiall
Prepared by the kyng / and ordeyned inspeciall
Entendyng that this relique and goffly treasure
Perpetuallly with them shulde remayne and endure

People oppressed with greuous infirmite
Distract persons / halt blynde and lame
Resortynge to her shryne with humilite
Shortly were cured by callynge of her name
Impotent creatures (the legende sayth the same)
Touchyng her tumb / were cured from payne
Whiche tumb remayneth at Hambury certayne

After she was translate / knowen it is well
The clergy to proceſſion / went after to mas
Honouring and prayſing / the kyng of Iſraell
And bleſſed Werburge / with moche ſolace
When diuine ſeruiſe duely ended was
The biſhops gaue they holy benedictions
The people departed glad to their manſions

This holy ſayd feſt of her tranſlacion
Was ordeyned and celebrate with ſolemnite
As ſayeth Ranulphus in his policronicon
About the yere of grace .vii. hundreth and .viii. ſothly
The .xi. kalendas of the moneth Julii
Reignyn in mercelande the ſaid kyng Coelrede
Than byſhop of Lichefeld was Hedda / as we rede

¶ Howe the body of ſaynt Werburge continued hole /
and ſubſtanciall at Hambury after the tranſlacion by the
ſpace of two hundreth yeres / tyll the danes were comon
to this lande / or it felle and was reſolued into powder
The .xxxiii. Chapitre.

This rutilant gemme and ſpecious flour
Hole and ſubſtanciall remayned at Hambury
Two hundreth yeres in beaute and colour
By ſingular grace / and angelicall cuſtodye
Tyll the danes were comon of malice and miſery
Of tre and myſchief / as we vnderſtande
We meane the comynge of pagans to this lande

¶ Whiche danes by ſufferaunce and diſpenſacion

Of almyghty god / for synne and iniquite
Punyshted vnpyteously all this region
With a wofull plage of great crudelite
The sharpe swerde of deth / hauryng no pite
Spared no creature / prest nor religious
Long tyme durynge in their malice odious

Then this bitall glebe by diuine ordinaunce
Voluntary permytted naturall resolution
Lest the cruell gentils / and wiked myscreauntes
With pollute handes full of corruption
Shulde touche her body / by indignation
Whiche pagans were enemyes to our lorde Iesu
Rebels to holy churche vnfeithfull and vntrue

Howe be it the power of our swete sauour
Myght haue continued the body of his syruant
All that longe season in worship and honour
As he preserued of his grace abundaunt
Many sayntes of this realme hole freshe and bernant
iiii. hundreth yeres ago / to this present day
And like so to endure / hole and clere alway.

Sothely to confidre / our lorde omnipotent
Glorious in his sayntes / scripture doth specifie
Of his diuine prouidence / pleasure and intent
Some haue resolved / for the greater glorie
Of their resurrection for the tyme truly
Some other to continue without corruption
To the true example of his promission

Many holy martyrs / for Christ haue byn slayne

The hie prestis of god murdered cruelly
Some with wyld beasts deuoured in certayne
Some cast in fiers on cooles to broyle and fry
Upon many other bydes fedynge openly
Of whom the prophet clerely doth reherce
The more payne here and wo / the more glory doubles.

The glorious martyr Stephan (as is red)
In this present lyfe dyd myracles many
Neuertherles / he raised no people that were deed
But after the resoluyng of his blessed body
He raised deed men to lyfe agayne truly
That the great power of lyfe myght sprynge
From iniurie of deth / by our heuen kyng.


Great was the respect of diuine grace
In the body of Werburge / without resolution
Shewd by her myracles / for mannes helth and solace
But greatt was the hope of the eterne reuouacion
In her body resolved to naturall consumption
Whiche for her merites to this present day
Helpeth all her seruauntes that to her will praye

Therefore worshyp we with singular deuocion
The holy luyng of this virgin gracious
For why / all the halowynge of her conuersacion
Belongeth to the honour of our lord Jesus
Whiche of his grace hath made her so glorious
And graunteth his mercy / and of synne remission
To all them / for whom / she maketh intercession.

Blessed pure virgin / moines and abbasse

O venerable werburge / mekely we the pray
 Make thou supplicacyon / to the graunter of grace
 After this lyfe present / that all we may
 Come to heuen blyſſe / whiche laſteth for ay
 There to beholde / the gloriouſ tryumpte
 To whom be laude / worſhyy / honour / & endles glorie.

C The table of the ſeconde boke of y^r glo-
 rious byrgyn ſaynt Werburge.


 If the comynge to this lande of paganes / and
 of the trouble of this lande / and how y^r kyng
 of Mercyens for drede departed out of this
 lande / and how longe ſaynt Werburge con-
 tynued incorrupte and hole at the abbay of
 Hambury. Ca.i.

C How the people of Hambury brought the ſhyne to
 Cheſter / and of the ſolempne receyuyng of it / by all the
 inhabytauntes of the countre. Ca.ii.

C A lytell deſcrypcyon of the fundacyon of Cheſter / and
 of y^r abbay churche within the ſayd cytee / where the holy
 ſhyne remaineth. Ca.iii.

C A breue reherſall / of the fyrſt fundacyon of the myn-
 ſter of Cheſter / & of the inſtytucyon of ſeculer chanons /
 in the tyme of kyng Edward ſenpor. Ca.iiii.

C Of the notable myracle of ſaynt Werburge in y^r tyme
 of chanons / and fyrſt how ſhe ſaued Cheſter from the de-
 ſtruccyon of Walſhe men. Ca.v.

¶ Howe saynte Werburge cured and healed a woman the tymes whiche was halt and lame to helthe and prosperite agayne. Cap.vi.

¶ Howe saynt Werburge saued and defended Chester from innumerable barbarik nacions purposynge to de stroye and spoyle the same cite vtterly. Cap.vii.

¶ Howe saynt Werburge by her merite sent fruyte to a barayne Woman by synguler praper made vnto her. Cap.viii.

¶ Howe a woman with childe by peyne brought out of her mynde & reason by saynt Werburge was restaured to prosperite and helthe agayne. Cap.ix.

¶ Of a nother woman vnlaufully wurkyng was made blynde and sore punysshed/and by saint Werburge was restored to syght agayne. Cap.x.

¶ Howe saint Werburge restored to helth & prosperite bi. lame & halt persons by singular grace. Ca.xi.

¶ Of a yonge man vnrighfully hanged was thries de lyuered from deth by saynt Werburge to helth and prosperite. Cap.xii.

¶ Howe at the maner of Aptō saynt Werburge refrayned wilde horses from distruction of her cornes. ca.xiii.

¶ Of a chanō of Chester hauyng his leg broke was restored to helth by saint Werburge his prones. Ca.xiiii.

¶ A breue reherfall or cronicle of certayne kyngis/and howe kyng Edgar came to Chester/also howe erle Leofrice repared diuers churches. Ca.xb.

¶ Of the comyng of Wyllyam cōquerour to this lande/ & howe Lupe was fonder of Chester monastery. ca.xbi.

¶ Howe saint Werburge taught her monke to kepe patience for the greater merite and glozi to come. ca.xbii.

¶ Howe landes rose bp within the salt see ayent Hilburghde by saint Werburge at the petition of William constable of Chestre. Ca.xbiii.

¶ Howe Matild / countesse of Chestre cōsellynge her husband agaynst the monasterie was drowned at Bartflowe with many other mo. Cap.xix.

¶ Howe a great fire like to destroye all Chestre by myracle ceased whan the holy thryne was borne about the towne by the monkes. Ca.xx.

¶ A breue reherfall of the myracles of saynt Werburge after her translatiō to Chestre. Ca.xxi.

¶ A charitable mocō / cōsel / & desire to al thinhabitātz win the cōntie palatin of Chest for y^r monastori. ca.xxii.

¶ A litle orison or prayer to y^r blessed virgin saint Werburge by the translatour of this warke. Ca.xxiii.

¶ A short conclusion of this litle werke to the reders by the translatour. Ca.xxiiii.

**¶ The prologe of the translatour of this lytell
treatyse in the seconde boke.**

Now whan we consyder / with mynde dyligent
The merueylous maners / & synguler condycion
Of the comyn people / symple and neclygent
Whiche without lytterature / and good informacyon
Ben lyke to Brute beestes / as in comparyson
Rude / wylde / and boystous / by a prouerbe certan
Good maners and conynge / maken a man.

Saynt Paule sayth / He wyngte to the Romans
How all thyng wyten / in holy scrypture
Is wyten for our doctryne / and ghostly ordynans
For our great conforte / and endeles pleasure
All thyng is knowen playnly / by lytterature
For all vertues / be noted by it full playne
Frome byce and neclygence / to abstayne certayne.

What were mankynde / without lytterature
Full lytell worthy / blynded by ignoraunce
The way to heuen / it declareth ryght sure
Thugh perfyte luryng / and good perseueraunce
By it we may be taught / for to do penaunce
Whan we transgresse / our lordes commaundment
It is a swete cordyall / for mannes entent.

How shulde the seven / scyences lyberall
Haue ben preserued / vnto this day
The wysdome / of the phylosophers all
But alone by lernynge / it is no nay
The notable actes / of our fathers I say

(yf litterature were nat) myght nat nowe be tolde
Nor auncient histories and cronycles olde

The lawe of ciuile / and of holy canon
By study be preferred with moche honour
To execute iustice / and for due reformation
The most blessed doctrine of our sauour
The actis of the apostoles / with the doctours four
Be preserued by wytyng / and put in memorie
With the lyues of saintes many a noble storie

Of whiche histories we purpose speciall
To speke of saint Werburge / vnder your protection
Delaryng the ende of her lyfe historiall
As we haue begon / and made playne mencion
In the fyrst volume by breue compilation
There playnly descriuynge her liniall discens
Of .iiii. myghty kyngdomes by true experience

Also we haue shewed in the sayd littel boke
Her goodly maners / and vertuous disposition
Of her yonge age / who so lyst theron to loke
And howe her bretherne suffred martyrdome
Of her fathers realme a litell discripcion
Howe she was professed in the place of Ely
Of her conuersacion within the sayd monastery

After for her vertue / howe she was made abbasse
Of diuers monasteries flouryng in vertue
And of the great miracles whiche there done was
For her great charite / by the grace of Jesu
Howe diuers of her kynrede dyd clerely excheue
Werburge. m.i.

All worldly pleasures and honours transitory
Professynge obedience at the place of Cley

Also we haue shewed vnder your licence
Of her departure from this lyfe mortall
And of her sepulture at the place of Hamburgence
The manyfolde myracles shewed by grace supernall
The wofull lamentacion of her sytters all
And howe after .ix. yere of her translation
By diuine ordinaunce miracles were done

We humble require you of your charite
To this seconde abstract to graunt pardon
Consyderynge we omytte whilom the historie
And speke of cronicles / makynge a digression
It is of no ignoraunce / nor presumption
But to enlarge the mater and sentence
To gladde the auditours / and moue their diligence

In our seconde boke expresse nowe wyll we
Vnder your licence and speciall tuicion
Of this blessed birgin / flourynge in chastite
Why and wherfore she came to Chestre towne
Principally by miracle / and diuine prouision
And howe for synne / vice / and wykednes
Danes oppressed this lande with wretchednes

And howe she was receyued at Chestre citie
Of the fyist foundacion of towne and the place
Of the great myracles there shewed openlie
To chanons and monkes / by singular grace
Vnto euery creature in extreme case

Howe Werburge deliuered the towne from enmite
From dreadfull fire / and plages of miserye

Also enchronicled foloweth here expresse
A brefe compilacion of kyng Edward senour
Of kyng Ethelstan / the great worthynes
Of humble kyng Edgar regnyng as emperour
Of his comyng to Chestre / of his great honour
And howe Erle Leofrice repared of his charite
The mynstre of Werburge gyuyng therto liberte

Of the seconde foundation of the sayd monastery
From secular chanons to monkes religious
Soone after the conquest sayth the historye
By the erle of Chestre nominat Hug. Lupus
With counsell and helpe of blessed Anselmus
And of the great compas of the sayd abbay
Enuired with walles myghty to assay

Howe Ric^e erle of Chestre by myracle ryght
Was preserued from daunger of Malshemen
And howe he was drowned about mydnyght
Purposyng to distroye the monastery certen
Celestiall signes were shewed to men and women
To children and innocentes by singular grace
Of blessed Werburge patronesse of the place

These miracles specified / and many other mo
This birgin shewed within Chestre cite
Whiche at this tyme we let ouer go
Left to the reders tedious it shulde be
Almyghty god both one two and the
Werburge.

m.ii.

Sende vs theyr grace to make a good ende
Helpe lady Werburge this warke to amende

Of the comyng of cruell pagans to this lande / and
howe saint Werburge longe lyenge hole and incorrupt
at Hambury . than was resolued to pouder. And howe
the kynge of merciens was chased from his lāde. Ca.i.

Afore the comyng of danes to this lande
Merueilous signes were shewed in syght
To conuert the people (as we vnderstande)
Sterres in the heuen shynnyng full bryght
Byuerly mouryng apperyng day and nyght
Kennynge in the ayre dreadfull to beholde
By longe continuance sayth the story olde

flamynge fire / dragons in the ayre sleynge
Thondryng / and layth / erth quake moost terrible
With many other signes / as cometis blasynge
Were seen in the ayre / to nature horrible
Upon clothynge of people bloody dropes odible
Euydently appered : the yere of grace
vii. hundreth. lxxxvi in many a place

By whiche sayd signes wonderfull to se
Two plages of pestilence folowed incontinent
The first was great derthes hungre and pouerte
The seconde was the greuous and sore punysshement
Of the cruell danes curled and fraudulent
Whiche trouble began the .iiii. yere of Bycticus
Kynge of west saxon / saith maister Alfridus.

The thyrde yere folowynge these signes in certen
Danes and Norwaies enterprised this lande
In the north partie . an host of armed men
Whiche cruelly spoiled and destroyed holy Ilande
With Cynmouth abbay / and all that myght be fonde
Drowned and slewe the people euerychone
Brenned churches / townes / spared no religion

In short tyme after the prenominate pagans
At tamptmouth reentred this realme agayne
Destroyed many cites by their myghty ordynaunce
Oppressed London / Canturbury by power certayne
The kynge of Merciens to escape was fayne
Kynge Adoulfus made the danes a batell
To whiche kynge by grace the victorie befell

yt ye wyll consydre the cause wherfore and why
Our lord suffred pagans to punyshe this region
The treuth was this : for synne specially
for in the primatiue churche / with great perfection
Kynge / quienes / dukes entred religion
Professed obedient chaste without propurte
Vertue to encrease / true loue and charite

That tyme was iustice ministred with mercy
True loue and amite founde in euery place
Dissemblacion / pride and fals enuye
Durst nat appere in halle nor in palace
Extorcion pollynge opteyned no grace
The commaundementes of god were obserued a ryght
Charite was feruent / encreasynge day and nyght
Werburge. m.iii.

By proces of tyme / as sayth myn auctour
Throughe great possession / power / and liberte
Vertue decreased in holy churche day and houre
Holy religion decayed pitiousle
Charite was colde / iustice and equite
Extorcion disceyte were bled euery day
Couetise / pride / lechery were ryued alway

Therefore our lorde of his great ryghtwisnes
Suffred cruell people to entre this region
A scourge to correct synne and wykednes
Like a swarme of bees from dyuers nacion
Whiche had no pite mercy nor compassion
Danes Gotes Norwayes and scottes also
Pictes and the wandeles with many other mo

These foresayd fearfull and cruell nacions
Most cruell pagans dyd great persecucion
From the begynnyng of Adelwolf, kyng of westsaxons /
Tyll the comynge of normans into this region
The space enduryng by full computacion
Two hundreth yeres complet .xxx. also
With the swerde of bengeaunce fire and moche mo

The yere of our lorde .D.CCC. fyfty and one
At Campsmouth arriued a great hoost of pagans
With .iii. hundreth ships and .l. men of armes echone
Whiche destroyed Douer / and put the land to greuans
Agayne Bernulphus the kyng of Mercians
The paynyms preuayled / and caused his hoost to fle
Whiche fortune enforced them more boldere to be.

But the yere of grace .D.CCC. five and sixtie
The greatestt nombie of the pagans all
viii. kynges entred this realme by victorie
Norwaies / gootes / Wandels / danes in especiall
With many other nacions within in generall
Kyng Hingwar and Hubba than came to this lande
Whiche slewe saint Edmunde kyng of Englande

The cruell paynymys and tyauntes moost furious
Repleit with malice / pride / and enuye
Seruauntes to satan and ministres malicious
Purposed to desolate holy churche wyckedly
Brenned monasteries and spoiled vtterly
Many churches chapels of a mortall hate
Slewe religious men and nonnes dyd violate

The people were punysshed in euery place
To olde siche and impotent they shewed no mercy
Ponge soukyng children coude fynde no grace
Wyddowes and wyues were put to bilany
Maydens were corrupt / and flayne chamfully
So all this realme endured confusion
Put to greuous peyne / deth / and affliction

After these infidels had ben at London
And there accomplished theyr cruell entent
They soone proceded towarde Lincoln region
From thens directly with hasty iugement
To the realme of Merciens noble and auncient
Right vnto Repton where the kyng lay
Robbyng and spoilynge all in theyr way

This kynge of Mercelande called Burdredus
 Regnyng .xxii. yere vpon the merciens
 Was clerely expulsed by the pagans furious
 And went vnto rome with pure conscience
 Where he is buried by diuine prouidence
 Whiche kyng was colyn by discent liniall
 To blessed Werburge so glorious and pudicall

This gracious virgin and preelect abbasse
 Buried at Hambury (as is sayd before)
 Continued incorrupt and hole in that place
 In vesture and body .ii. hundreth yere and more
 But whan the danes came With suche rigour
 To Kepton abbay / than she was resolued
 And of deuotion full richely shyned

Howe the people of Hambury brought the shryne to
 Chestre / and of the solemne receyvinge of it by all the in
 habitauntes of Chestyre. Cap. ii.

In meane tyme the danes pitously destroyed
 The monasteries of Werburge / Crenā & Medō
 As they many other places had euill oppressed
 In the north and east part of this region
 The kyngdome of Kent suffred lyke punicion
 The Ile of Wyght endured moche turment
 So dyd the Westmarches / for punyschement

The people of Hambury Wysely consydering
 The comynge of danes vnto Kepton
 And of the departure of Burdred theyr kyng
 Howe all Englande was in great affliction

And howe they were next to endure punicion
Whiche forsayd Repton was distaunt from Hambury
The space of .h. mile sayth the history

The Hamburgent With all the comons and clergy
Dredynge full sore the pagans flagellacions
Of their lyues desperate / but for the shyne specially
To our blessed sauour made dayly inuocacions
With bigils prayers and feruent meditations
To preserue the countrey / the relique / the shyne
From daunger of enmite and miserable rupne

As they continued in cotidian prayer
The best remedie sekynge for to fynde
To auoide beracion and all greuous daunger
Of theyr great enemies cursed and bnhynde
The holy goost inspired theyr mynde
To take the shyne with great humilite
And bynge it to Cheshire from perill and enmyte

They toke this riall relique of reuerence
With great mekenes deuocion and seruour
Through the grace of god theyr helpe and defence
Came towarde Cheshire with diligence and honour
A place preordinat by our sauour
Where her body shulde rest and worshipped be
Magnified with miracles next our ladie

¶ When the clergie of Cheshire and the citezens
Herde tell of the comynge of this noble abbasse
They made preparacion and great diligence
In theyr best maner worship and solace
Werburge. n.i.

To mete this relique of singular grace
The great estates / and rulers of the countray
Were redy to honour saint Werburge that day

First was ordeyned a solemne procession
With crosles / and baners / and surges clere lyght
The belles were tolled for ioye and deuocion
The ministres of god in coopes redy dight
With censours of siluer / to encense her body right
All prestis and clerkes redy to say and synge
Proceeded in ordre / this holy virgin prayng

Next to the clergie approached in degree
The lordes of the kyng knyghtes barons all
With feruent deuocion / prayng the trinite
Whiche sent to them suche comfort spirituall
The citezens ensued with gladnes cordiall
With hokes and beades / magnifieng our maker
For this great treasure to kepe them from daunger

Venerable virgins next sette in ordre clere
With lilies in theyr handes / coronate with chastite
Good widowes and wyues appoynted well were
Gyuyng true thankes vnto this virgin fre
Per them assemble all the commonte
In all goodly maner dyuisid by discrecion
Prayng saynt Werburge with humiliacion

When they approached to her hie presence
And comon were afore this relique most riall
They kneled all downe with mycle reuerence
Salutinge the kyng with honour victoriall

Magnifyng With melodye and tunys muscally
This glorious birgin / nothyng done amis
Syngynge Te deum to the kyng of blyss

The lordes / the citezins / and all the commons
Meekely submytted themselfe to the thyne
With manyfolde prayes and humble supplications
With interiour loue / and morall discipline
Trustyng all in her to saue them from ruyne
From greuous daunger / and cruell enmite
By her entercession vnto the trinite

They gaue due thankes vnto this abbasse
Deuoutly sayenge knelyng vpon kne
Welcome swete lady replet with grace
The floure of mekenes / and of chastite
The cristall of clemmes and virginite
Welcome thou art to vs euerychone
A speciall comfort for vs to trust vpon

Welcome swete princeesse / kynges doughter dere
Welcome faire creature / and rose of merciens
The diamonde of dignite / and gēme of shenyng clere
Birgin and moyniall of mycle excellence
Welcome holy abbasse of hie preeminence
The rutilant saphire of syncerite
Welcome swete patronesse to Chestre cite

Thou art our refuge / and singular succour
Our sure tuicion next to the trinite
Our speciall defence at euery hour
To releue thy seruauntes in all necessite
Werburge. n.ii.

Thou art our solace and helpe in eche degre
Our ioye / trust / and comfort / and goostly treasure
Welcome to this towne for euer to endure

¶ Agaynst her comynge into Chestre cite
The stretes were strawed with flours fragrant
The mancions and halles edified rialle
Were hanged with arras pecious and pleasaunt
Torches were caried on eche syde flagrant
Also ouer the shryne was prepared a canaby
Of cloth of golde and tissewe riche and costly

Thus with great worship decour and dignite
Of all the clergie lordis and citezens
She was receyued with great humilite
Into the cite with humble reuerence
The clergie syngyng with mycle diligence
The comons prayeng with loue feruent
Folowyng this relique after their entent

In procession they passed all in to the towne
With ioye and great gladnes ye may besure
In orde togyther in charite and deuocion
Praylyng our sauour and this birgin pure
They brought full solemple with goostly peasure
This riall relique to the moost noble place
Within all the cite as our lordes wyll was

This seconde translaton of this birgin bright
From Hambury abbay vnto Chestre cite
Was celebrate with ioye and gladnes full right
The yere of our saueur in his humanite

biii. hundredth complet .b. and seuentie
Alured reigned than kyng of this region
Victorious and liberall / coronate at London

This kyng deuyled in .iiii. partes his richesse
One parte to the poore the seconde to religion
One thynde part to scholers / the fourth to bild churches
And of a day naturall / he made triū diuision
biii. houres to rede and praye with feruent deuotion
biii. houres occupied with businesse naturall
And other .biii. houres to rule his realme riall

henric° .li°.b.

Nobilitas innata tibi probitas honorem
Armipotens Aluredē dedit / probitasq; laborem :
Perpetuumq; labor nomen : cui mixta dolori
Gaudia semper erant : spes semper mixta timori.
Si modo victus erat / ad crastina bella parabat
Si modo victor erat / ad crastina bella pauebat
Jam post transactos regni viteq; labores /
Christe ei sit vera quies / sceptrumq; perenne.

¶ A litel description of the foundation of Chestre / and
of the abbay church within the sayd cite / where y^e holy
thyne by grace remayneth. Cap.iii.

Two cites of legions in cronicles we fynde
One in south Wales / in the tyme of Claudius
Called Caerulka / by britons had in mynde
Orels Caerleon / burylded by kyng Belinus
Where somtyme was a legion of knyghtes chivalrous
This cite of legions was whilom the byshops se
Unto all south wales / nominat Wenedocie
Werburge. n.iii.

Another cite of legions we may fynde also
In the west part of Englande / by the water of Dee
Called Caerlleon of britons longe ago
After named Chestre by great auctoite
Julius the emperour sende to this sayd cite
A legion of knyghtes for to subdue Irelande
Like wyse dyd Claudius (as we vnderstande)

The founder of Chestre / as sayth Policronicon
Was Leon Bauer / a myghty stronge gyaunt
Whiche buylde caues and dongions many one
No goodly buyldyng / propre ne pleasaunt
But the kynge Leil a briton sure and valiaunt
Was founder of Chestre by pleasaunt buyldyng
And of Caerleil also / named by the kynge

Ranulphus in his cronicle yet doth expresse
The cite of Chestre edified for to be
By the noble romans prudence and richesse
Whan a legion of knyghtes was sende to the cite
Rather than by the wyldome of Britons or policie
Obiectyng clere agaynst the britons fundacion
Whiche auctour resteth in his owne opinion.

A. gratie. lxx.

Kyng Marius a byton regnyng in prosperite
In the West partie of this noble region
Ampliat and walled strongly Chestre cite
And myghtyly fortified the sayd fundacion
Thus eche auctour holdeth a singular opinion
This Marius slewe Keodric kyng of pictis lande
Callyng the place of his name Westmarilande.

This cite of legions so called by the Romans
Nowe is nominat in latine of his proprete
Cestria quasi castris / of honour and pleasance
Proued by the buyldynge of olde antiquite
In cellers and lowe boultres / and halles of realte
Lyke a comly castell / myghty stronge and sure
Eche house like a toure somtyme of great pleasure

Unto the sayd Chestre all north wales subiect were
For reformation Justice and iugement
Theyr bysshops see also it was many a yere
Enduryng the gouernaunce of brutes auncient
To saxons and britons a place indifferent
The inhabitauntes of it manfull and liberall
Constant sad and bertuous / and gentyll continuall

Of frutes and cornes there is great habundaunce
Wooddes / parkes / forestes / and beettis of benare
Pastures / feeldes / comons / the cite to auauunce
Waters / pooles / pondes / of fysh the great plente
Most swete holsonie ayre by the water of dee
There is great marchandise / thypps / and wynges strang
With all thyng of pleasure the citezens amonge

The yere of our lorde a hundreth sixe and fyfty
Reigned vpon this lande a briton kyng Lucius
Whiche with great desire required instantly
His realme to be baptized of pope Clentherius
Whose charitable mocion was harde full gratius
The pope enioyed / graunted his petition
And sende .ii. doctours to conuerte this region
Werburge. n.iiii.

The doctours by prechynge and singular grace
In short tyme conuerted the greater Britayne
The people confessed their synne and trespase
Baptized all were / forgyuenes dyd attayne
Idolatrie celled through out this lande certayne
With grace circumfulced and lyghtned was England
By faith to god professed was all Wales and Scotlande

Kynge Lucius ordeyned / by the doctours mocion
xxviii. bishops in this realme for to be
And .iii. archebishops for godly exhortacion
To reduce the people to vertue and humilite
At London was set the chief archebishops se
The seconde in south Wales at cite of legions
The thyrde was at yorke all subiect to the britons

Churches were edified in many a place
Here in the more Britayne with diligent labour
Christis faith encreased by speciall grace
Faithfull religion delated euery hour
Diuine seruice was songon & sayd with great honour
True faith and deuocion were dayly encreasyng
Namely in Cheffre by grace continuall abidyng.

Certaynly sith baptym came to Cheffre cite
Soone after Lucius and afore kynge Arthure
By the grace of god and their humilite
The faith of holy churche dyd euer there endure
Without reciduation and infection / sure
Wherefore it is worthy a singular commendacion
Above all the citees and townes of this region

The perfect begynnyng and fyrst foundacion
Of the monasterie within the sayd cite
Was at the same tyme by famous opinion
That baptym began within this countre
The great lordes of Chestre of landes and auncetre
First edified the church for comfort spirituall
In honour of the apostels Peter and Paule

Whiche church was principall to all the cite
And the mowther church called withouten doubt
It was their buriall by great auctorite
To all this sayd cite / and .xii. myle without
The cemiterie was large to compase it about
But what by sufferaunce and processe of tyme
Many olde customes ben brought now to ruyne

In whiche mother church of Peter and Paule
All holy sacramentes ministred dayly were
With great encrease of vertues all
Continuall endurynge more than .CCC. yere
In the britons tyme / of blodde noble and clere
Afore the comynge of saxons to this lande
Whiche with apostasie infected all Englande

So after that the Angles / Jutes / and saxons
By fortune of batell / power and policie
Had clerely subdued all the olde britons
And them expulsed to wales and wyld countre
The faith of holy church remayned at chestre cite
In the sayd church truely by singular grace alone
Like as the faith of Peter neuer fayled at Rome

What tyme saint Austin the doctour of Englande
Had baptized Ethelbrut kyng of Kent
And by relacion dyd fully vnderstande
That the faith of Christ most digne and excellent
In the cite of legions was truely remanent
In the churche of the apostoles Peter and Paule
He magnified our lorde with thanke speciall

That season there was a noble monasterie
xii. myles from Chestre nominate Bangour
Where religious monkes lyued vertuouflye
Almost .iii. thousande / obedient euery hour
Without possessions / lyuyng by theyr labour
Unto whiche place he sende for helpe at nede
To conuert the saxons (sayth venerable Bede)

Saynt Austin approched the cite of legions
Where the sayd couent afore hym were present
Whom he required to preche to the saxons
The faith of holy churche and baptysm diligent
To whose humble prayer / they were disobedient
Obseryng no charite / yet for theyr great pride
Many of them were slayne by kyng Ethelfride

That season the britons remayned vnder licence
Of Angles and saxons within the sayd cite
Tyll the dayes of Offa kyng of merciens
Regnyng in the west marche with great victorie
Whiche kyng expelled by power and chivalrie
All brutes and walthemen clere out of his londe
In peyne of punysshement none there to be fonde

When the said churche hauynge great liberte
Dayly augmented in vertue and holynes
Prestis and clerkes prayled the holy trinite
And the sayd apostoles with great mekenes
The cite encreased in worshyp and ryches
Churches were edified with feruent deuotion
In sondrie places within the sayd towne

This noble kyng Offa agaynst the pagans
Of .xvii. batels has euer the victorie
Confederate was with great Charles kyng of fraunce /
And edified saint Albans monasterye
Of Englande first toke the hole monarchie
Gaue Peter pens vnto the court of Rome
Tranllate to Lichefeld, the se of Canturbury
xxxix. yere reigned fully in this region.

¶ A breste reherfall of the first foundacion of the mynstre
of Chestre / and of the institucion of secular chanons in
the tyme of kyng Edwardeseniour. Cap.iiii.

The yere of grace .D.CCC. seuynte and fyue
Kyng Alured regned vpon this region
The relique the shryne full memoratyue
Was brought to Chestre for our consolacion
Reuerently receyued set with deuotion
In the moutther churche of saint Peter and Paule
(As afore is sayd) a place moost principall.

In whiche holy place vnto this present day
She bodily resteth by diuine providence
And so by his grace shall continue alway
In honour worshyp / and mycle reuerence

A deuout oratorie of bertue and excellence
Prepared by our lorde / where speciall remedy
Is agayne all greuans in soule and in body

The primatpue gyftes gyuen to the place
Immediatly were after her comynge
Of deuout people replet with grace
In the dayes of the forsayd Alured kyng
Of landes and libertes they made moche offerynge
To god and saint Werburge / after theyr possession
Cristyng to her prayer and sure protection

The people with deuocion and mynde feruent
Gauē diuers enornmentes vnto this place
Some gauē a coope / and some a bestement
Some other a chalice / and some a corporace
Many albes and other clothes offred ther was
Some crosse of golde / some booke / some belles
The pore folke gauē surges / torches / and towelles

The citezens offered to the sayd birgine
For the great miracles amonge them wrought
Many riall gyftes of Jewels to the shine
Thankynge our lorde that hath vs all bought
And blessed Werburge in worde dede and thought
Women and children she mynded full gracious
As testifieth the archebishop Antoninus

Diuine seruice was obserued deuoutly
Euery day increasynge with feruent adoration
As the feest required / and the solemnite
To the honour of our lorde and hie glorification

Preistis and clerkes with pure meditacion
Obersuryng their dutie gaue vertuous example
Of great perfection to the comon people

¶ After kyng Alured / regned his son
Edward, senior by limiall discence
Crowned the yere of grace .ix. hundreth and one
With worldly glorie and great preeminence
Buiided castels townes of myghty defence
Subdued the danes .vii. tymes in batell
Encreased his realme manfully and well.

That tyme the realme of mericiens was translate
By the kyng / and gyuen to duke Ethelrede
A noble man of auncetre / politiche and fortunate
Whiche married his syster lady Elfede
Boughter to the forsaide haliant kyng Alurede
The sayd gentilman was wyle and vertuous
Sad and discrete pacient and famous

This lady Elfede duchesse of mericiens
Had speciall loue and singular affection
To blessed Werburge and true confidence
Wherfore she mynded with great dilectacion
To edifie a mynstre a place of deuocion
To this holy virgin for profite of her soule
Enlargynge the church of Peter and of Paule

She moued her husbände with great mekenes
To supplie the same dede of his charite
And diuers other nobles of theyr goodnes
For aide in that cause after their degree

Joyfull was the duke of the mocion gosse
Glad were the nobles within all the shire
To founde a mynstre after her desire

Afore the holy roode in a table writen is
At saint Johans churche without the sayd cite
Howe that prince Edmund, the thyrde son e wis
Of Edward senior true foundour shulde be
To whom lady Eliede was aunt by auncetre
So betwix twayne was founded in short space
An holy mynstre of bertue full and grace

They sende for masons bpon euery syde
Counnyng in geometrie / the foundation to take
For a large mynstre longe hie and wyde
Substancially wrought / the best that they can make
To the honour of god / for saynt Werburge sake
At the est ende taken theyr sure foundation
Of the apostoles churche / ioynyng both as one

When it was edified / and curiously wrought
And all thyng ended / in goodly proporcion
Then riche enornmentes were offred and brought
Of the said nobles with great deuocion
Temporall landes / rentes / possession
Were gyuen for euer to mayntayne the place
Of blessed Werburge by singular grace

Spirituall ministres were elect also
Secular chanons of great humilite
To synge and psalmodise our sauour bnto
Within the sayd mynstre haupnge a perpetuite

Prebendes were assigned to that fraternite
With townes / borowes / and fredomes manifest
Continuallie encreasynge vnto the conquest

And the olde churche of Peter and of Paule
By a generall counsell of the spiritualte
With helpe of the duke moost principall
Was translate to the myddes of the sayd cite
Where a paretthe churche was edified truele
In honour of the aforesayd apostoles twayne
Whiche shall for euer by grace diuine remaine

Also we may note holdyng none opinion
This lady Elde of her charite
Of the sayd mother churche translate the patron
Caused the sayd oratorie reconciled to be
In the honour of the most blessed trinite
And of saynt Oswalde martyr and kyng
For the loue she had to hym continuynge

The yere of our lorde .ix. hundredeth and .iiii.
This noble duchesse with mycle royalte
Reedified Chestre / and fortified it full ryght
Churche / house / and wall decayed piteousle
Thus brought vnto ruyne was Chestre cite
First by Ethelfride kyng of Northumberlande
And by danes / norwaies beryng all Englande

Also she enlarged this sayd olde cite
With newe myghty walles stronge all about
Almost by proporcion double in quantite
To the forther byldynge brought without dout

She compassed in the castell enemies to hold out
Within the sayd Wallles to defend, the towne
Agaynst danes and walshemē to dryue them all downe

After the deth of her husband Ethelrede
She ruled the realme of mercelande manfully
Buylded churches / and townes repared in dede
As Staford, / Warwike / Chontworth / and Shirisbury
Of newe she edified Runcorn and Edisbury
The body of saynt Oswald, also she translate
from Bardeney to Gloucetur there to be tumulate

Where she edified a noble monastery
With licence of her brother afore nominate
In honour of saint Peter / ouer the blessed body
Of the sayd saint Oswald, / kyng and marty, coronate
In wiche monastery this lady was tumulate
The pere of our lorde .ix. hundreth and nyntene
Whom myn auctour prayseth in this wordes serene
Henric^o .li. b.

O Elleda potens / o terror virgo birgum :
Vicitrix nature nomine digna biri.
Te quoq; splendidior fecit natura puellam
Te probitas fecit nomen habere biri.
Te mutare docet sed solum nomina sexus
Tu regina potens / reorq; trophea parans
Jam nec cesarei tantū meruere triumphū
Caesare splendidior virgo birago . Tale.

¶ Of the notable myracles of saynt Werburge shewed
in the tyme of chanons / and fyrst howe she saued Chest
from distruction of walshemen Cap. b.

This glorious Werburge and virgin pure
By singular grace of god omnipotent
Shewed many myracles to euery creature
To blynde / dombe / halt / lame / and impotent
In the cite of Chestre / whan her thyne was present
Like wyse as in her lyfe at Medon / at Hambury
Witneseth the same her true legende and history

Where to the honour / prayse / and laudacion
Of Jesu / the seconde persone in trinite
And of this virgin a speciall commendacion
We purpose to reherse nowe with charite
Under the protection of you that shall the reders be
Parte of the myracles / with mynde diligent
In this humble stile / and sentence consequent

The first myracle / that our blessed sauour
Shewed for his spouses / after her translation
To Chestre : was nye the tyme of Edwardes seniour
Son to kyng Alured famous of renouwe
The Name of britons was chaunged that season
Were named walshe men in the montaynes segregate
Euer to the saxons haurynge inwarde hate

The Walshe men that tyme had ouer them a kyng
Called Griffinus / to be theyr gouernour
Elected by the comons their appetite folowynge
Endurate with malice / couetise and rancour
Enemies to englysshemen / as is said before
This kyng intended by mortall enuy
The cite of Chestre to spoyle and distraye
Werburge.

o.i.

A myghty host descended from the mountans
Well armed and strongly approachyng the cite
Prepared for batell with them great ordinaunce
The sayd Griffinus and all his company
With his power passed ouer the water of Dee
Whiche ryuer adioyneth to the sayd towne
Betwene Englande and Wales a sure diuision

This kynge layd siege vnto Chestre cite
With all his great host / there honour to wyn
By policie of warre / encreasynge myghtyle
for whiche the citezens remaynyng within
were sore disconsolate like for to twyn
With wofull heuy hartes they dyd call and crye
Upon blessed Werburge for helpe and remedye

The charitable chanons with great deuocion
Toke the holy shryne of theyr patrones
Set it on the towne walles for helpe and tuicion
Trustynge on her to be saued from distres
But one of the ennemyes with great wychednes
Smot the sayd shryne in castyng of a stone
And it empaired / piteous to loke vpon

Anone great punysshement vpon them all lyght
The kyng and his host were smytten with blyndnes
That of the cite / they had no manner of syght
And he that smote the holy shryne doubtles
Was greuously vered with a sprite of darkenes
And with hidous payne expired miserably
The kynge was sore adred / and all his company

Shortly the kynge remoued his great host
 Departed from the cite without any praye
 And gaue in commaundement in euery coost
 Saynt Werburge landes to meyntheyne alway
 Assigned her possessions euer after that day
 With the signe of the crosse a token euident
 In pleasynge this birgin / for drede of punysshement.

C. Howe saynt Werburge cured and healed a woman
 the tymes (whiche was halte and lame) to helth and p-
 prosperite agayne. Cap. vi.

In the cite of Chestre (the legende doth expresse)
 An honest matrone dwelled / Egidia nominat
 Whiche by continuance / and payne of sickenes
 Was made halt and lame / of helth all desperate
 yet to saynt Werburge her hart was eleuate
 Instantly required with humble supplicacion
 This holy birgin for helth / and preseruacion

Anone by the merite of this lady clere
 The patient restored to helth and prosperite
 Gave honour and thankes to Werburge and prayer
 Entendynge euer after her true seruaunt to be
 And truely continue lyuynge in pure chastite
 But shortly she brake her promesse made insyght
 folowynge her appetite and carnall lustes full ryght

She had great riches welth and prosperite
 And married with pleasure after her entencion
 Where thries she endured her olde infirmite
 And thries was cured by meke intercession
Werburge. o.ii.

To helth of body from peynfull contraction
Thus by the merite of this virgin pure
She was deliuered from peyne thies to pleasure

This forsayd Eadgide prudently pondering
These notable miracles with her godly eye
Gauē great cōmendacion and speciall thankynge
To almyghty god / with feruent humilite
And to saynt Werburge knelynge on kne
Came to her oratorie and gauē an oblacion
To the holy thyne with singular deuocion

C. Howe saynt Werburge saued Chestre from innume-
rable barbarike nations / purposynge to distroye and
spoyle the sayd cite vtterly Cap. vii.

Another tyme innumerable barbarike nations
Came to spoyle Chestre to robbe it and distroy
(Sayth the hystorie) from diuers regions
Harolde kyng of danes / the kyng of gotes & galwed
Malcolyn of Scotlande and all theyr company
With baners displayed well armed to fyght
Theyr tentes rialy in hoole heth were pyght

They set theyr ordinaunce agaynst the towne
Upon euery side / timorous for to se
Namely at the northgate they were redy bowne
By myght police to haue entred the cite
The citezens dreyng to be in captiuite
Made intercession vnto this holy abbasse
For theyr deliuerance in suche extreme case

The deuout chanons sette the holy thyne
Agaynst theyr enemies at the sayd northgate
Trustyng to Werburge to saue them from ruyne
And shewe some myracle to them disconsolate
For the citezens were of their lyues desperate
Passyng mannes mynde to escape theyr daunger
But all only by merite of this birgin clere

As the kynges were sautyng this forsayd cite
Trustyng for a praye to haue it euery hour
One of the sayd enemies replet with iniquite
Nat worthypyng y^r birgin / nor dreyng our sauour
Smote this riall relique with a stone in his rancour
Broke therof a corner curiously wrought
Cast all to the ground : than sorowe came vnought

The sayd malefactour nat passyng the place
Clered with the deuill for his greuous offence
Roryng and yellyng his outrageous trespass
Toke his tonge a sonder in wodely violence
A miserable expired afore them in presence
Satan ceased nat to shewe great punishment
Upon his soule and body / by signes euident

These kynges consideryng this soden benegaunce
Amonge them all lyght so soone and hastily
Shortly remoued theyr great ordinance
Departed from the cite with theyr company
Callyng on this birgin fast for grace and mercy
Promyttynge neuer after to retourne agayne
To disquiete her seruauntes and cite in certayne
Werburge
a.iii.

To helth of body from peynfull contraction
Thus by the merite of this virgin pure
She was deliuered from peyne thries to pleasure

This forsayd Cadgide prudently pondering
These notable miracles with her goffly eye
Gauē great cōmendacion and speciall thankyng
To almyghty god / with feruent humilite
And to saynt Werburge knelynge on kne
Came to her oratorie and gauē an oblacion
To the holy thyne with singular deuocion

C. Howe saynt Werburge saued Chestre from innume-
rable barbarike nacions / purposyng to dystroye and
spoyl the sayd cite vtterly Cap. vii.

A Nother tyme innumerable barbarike nacions
Came to spoyl Chestre to robbe it and dystroy
(Sayth the historye) from diuers regions
Harolde kyng of danes / the kyng of gotes & galwed
Maucolyn of Scotlande and all theyr company
With baners displayed well armed to fyght
Theyr tentes riallly in hoole heth were pyght

They set theyr ordinaunce agaynst the towne
Upon euery side / timorous for to se
Namely at the northgate they were redy bowne
By myght police to haue entred the cite
The citezens dredyng to be in captiuite
Made intercession vnto this holy abbasse
For theyr deliuerance in suche extreme case

The deuout chanons sette the holy thynne
Agaynst theyr enemies at the sayd northgate
Trustynge to Werburge to saue them from ruyne
And shewe some myracle to them disconsolate
For the citezens were of their lynes desperate
Passynge mannes mynde to escape theyr daunger
But all only by merite of this virgin clere

As the kynges were sautyng this forsayd cite
Trustyng for a praye to haue it euery hour
One of the sayd ennemies replet with iniquite
Nat worshyppynge y^e virgin / nor dredyng our sauour
Smote this riall relique with a stone in his rancour
Broke therof a corner curiously wrought
Cast all to the grounde : than sorowe came vnsoought

The sayd malefactour nat passynge the place
Cured with the deuill for his greuous offence
Roryng and yellyng his outrageous trespass
Toke his tonge a sonder in wodely violence
Miserable expired afore them in presence
Satan ceased nat to shewe great purgishment
Upon his soule and body / by signes euident

These kynges considerynge this soden benegaunce
Amonge them all lyght so soone and hastely
Shortly remoued theyr great ordinaunce
Departed from the cite with theyr company
Callyng on this virgin fast for grace and mercy
Promyttynge neuer after to retourne agayne
To disquiete her seruauntes and cite in certayne
Werburge
a.iii.

C. Howe saynt Werburge by her merite sent frute to a
barrayne woman by syngular prayer made vnto her
The .viii. chapitre.

A Noble gentilman / a consul in office
Descendynge of the hie and riall blodde of costly
Elected a spouses at his owne device
A swete faire gentilwoman curtes and comly
Nominat Judith / ioynded to hym in matrimony
With whom this lady lyued a longe season
Barrayn and fruteles of generacion

She daily lamented her great wretchednes
As woman infortunate full of miserie
Prayed to saynt Werburge with interiour mekenes
For remedy and helpe agaynst that woful infamye
Desired to haue issue and frute of her bodey
If it pleased god / and this virgin also
Most greattest comfort to bynge her hert from wo

Saynt Werburge appered to her in vison
In white bright besture / clere as the cristall
Expresynge wordes of great consolacion
Most ioyfull to Judith to make reherfall
Commaundyng her by the effect speciall
To go to her churche with singular deuocion
And praye our sauour with humble supplicacion

Also for to compasse her holy aulter
With a linen cloth / knelyng on her kne
And after for to take the same cloth in fer^r
And compas her wombe about reuerentle

This Judith was ioyfull / and rose by yerle
And truely fulfilled this gossly vision
From thens departed to her propre mancion

Soone after this wyfe afore reherled
Conceyued a childe and had succession
Prayfing this birgin in hart worde and dede
And after the tyme of her purification
Of the same faire cloth she made oblacion
Richely set in syluer / well wrought in compas
With many riche enornementes she sende to this place

After came herselfe vnto the monastery
With many of her neighbours / ther^e nye dwelling
Prayfing and laudyng this glorious lady
With cordiall thankynges makyng theyr offeryng
Of this great myracles true witnes bearyng
Departed from the place with ioy and deuocion
All the sayd company / eche to theyr mancion.

C. Of a woman great with childe with peyne brought
out of her wytte / by saynt Werburge was restoured to
reason agayne. Cap. ix.

In the prouince of Chestre / knowen it is of olde
A certayne man dwelled / of great honeste
Whiche had a doughter disposed manyfolde
To sondre vertues / clennes / and humilite
This humble mayde ioyned was in matrimonye
To an honest yong man / of whom she conceyued
And was great with childe / openly perceyued

When the tyme approached of her deliuerance
Clered she was with mycle wo and payne
Continuallly enduryng / with suche hidous greuaunce
That out of her mynde she went incertayne
All phisike and medicyns were founde to her in bayne
No comfort in erth helpe nor remedye
For her myght be founde in suche extremitie

Her father and mother / and her frendes all
Brought theyr dere doughter with great deuotion
To saynt Werburge churche / requirynge speciall
This blessed virgin / with humble intercession
To helpe the pacient from all beracion
Promyttynge an oblation to this lady bryght
When she vnto reason were comen a ryght

And as she slepped at the aulter ende
Closefully cruciat with peynes hiduous
Passyng mannes cure it for to amende
Anone by the merite of this virgin glorious
She was released from all payne greuous
And fully restored to her reason agayne
Had good deliuerance / and spedde well in certayne

Whiche myracle knowen / her frendes euerychone
And all the good matrons of the sayd cite
Came holly togyther with theyr oblation
To the holy wyne thankynge with hart fre
This blessed virgin of her benigneite
Whiche is so redy a mediatrixe alway
To helpe her true seruauntes both nyght and day

C. Howe an other woman vndlawfully wurkyng was
made blynde / and by saynt Werburge restored was to
her syght agayne. Cap.r.

Within the same cite afore the abbay gate
Dwelled a woman / which brake the comaundement
Of god and holy churche / hye sabbot day dyd violate
Unlawfully wurkyng : wherfore great purgysment
Fell vpon this woman with peynes equiuallent
Sodaynly smytten / wurkyng full busely
With greuous blyndnes / and mycle miserye

This woman consyderyng her syght was gone
The pleasure of this worlde her helpe and succour
Hauyng to lyue by / small riches or none
Cried maynly out out alas euery hour
Who is me wretche fulfilled with dolour
Alas I was borne to abyde this wofull day
My maker to displease / alas what shall I say ?

She called to memorie with hye discrecion
The myracles that Werburge shewed to mankynde
By grace she repented / with suche contricion
That water distilled from her eyes blynde
Dolefully lamentyng / that she was so vnkynde
Ruthfully was brought to Werburge maynory
Trustyng in this virgin to haue remedy

As she continued in her supplicacion
Wofully wepyng / abidyng the great grace
Of blessed Werburge / with singular inuocacion
Anone she was cured to helth and solace.

Werburge

p.i.

Restored to her eyesight / she passed the place
Prayled our lorde and this birgin pure
Was a holy woman after ye may be sure.

C. How saint Werburge restored to helth and pſperite
bi. lame and halt pſons by ſingular grace. **Cap.xi.**

The excellent fame of this glorious lady
Dilated was through all this region
Manifest by myracles full honorably
Therefore from diuers partes came many a person
For helth of body and godly conuerſacion
Some to be cured from payne intollerable
And some of oldesoꝛes that were incurable

Amonge whom there came vnto her place
Sixe wofull perſones / cured for to be
Halt blynde and lame beſekyng her of grace
With humble ſupplicacion vpon them haue pite
With wepyng treaſes ſayenge / o ſouerayn ladie
O imperiall princeſſe / and kynges doughter dere
Heele our diſeaſe by thy inſtant prayer

O blessed birgin and holy moiriall
O glorious abbasse / and worthy gouernour
O pereles parens and miniſtre ſpirituall
O celeſtiall gemme reſplendent with honour
Praye for vs wretches vnto our ſauour
That we may opteyne here mercy and grace
Cured of our ſekenes / after to ſe thy face

Thy name transcendeth this realme ſwete lady

Thy myracles magnifyen thy great goodnes
Thy worshyp encreaseeth with honour and glorie
Daily euermore through thy great holynes
Shewe nowe thy power / cure vs from sekenes
That by the we may prayse the kyng of blis
As thou hast cured manyone of this

By these meke prayers / in hert full penitent
And many other orisons sayd priuately
Callyng on this birgin with deuocion feruent
For certayne / or they passed the monastery
They were all cured from peyne and malady
In wytnes wherof / and triall as it was
They staues remayned longe after in the place

T Howe a yonge man thies hanged vnlawfully Was
thies deliuered by saynt Werburge from dethe to lyfe
and lyberte. Cap. xii.

A Lmyghty god gaue in commaundement
By moises lawe / to his people echone
No innocent to flee by wrongfull iudgement
Nor causeles to punyshe by greuous oppression
Also to beware of lyght suspicion
Wherof a myracle we shall nowe expresse
Done in Chestre cite by Werburge they patronesse

A certayne yonge man dwelled in the cite
Honest in maners / and of good conuersacion
Disposed to vertue and humilite
Was arrest and taken of a lyght suspicion
By the officers and rules of the sayd towne
Werburge. p. ii.

Gyltes accused most innocently
Condemned and iudged to deth shamfully

After sentence gyuen / ministres were all redy
Upon the iudgement to do execucion
He was fettred and brought to the gebbet by and by
And as a stronge thefe hanged therbpon
His frendes and cosyns for hym made great mone
Alas what tongue myght expresse the wo
They made that tyme departynge hym fro

And as this innocent hang in his payne
He called to mynd the manyfolde goodnes
The myracles of Werburge she wed her certayne
Howe she had saued many in great distress
So whan he myght no wordes expresse
In mynde he required her / and humblie dyd pray
From shamfull deth to saue hym that day

Whan all the officers departed were thens
Supposynge the soule seperate from the body
A white doue descended afore them in presence
And lyght bpon the gebbet immediatly
The byrde with his byll brake the rope truely
The prisoner escaped that tyme from deth
Shortly reuiuyng toke naturall bryeth

Whiche thyng notified so meruailous in syght
The ministers returned / they labour in bayne
Toke this innocent by power and myght
Upon the sayd gebbet hanged hym agayne
Thus he was deliuered by myracle from payne

The tortuous turlmentours celled their tyranny
Permytted the prisoner to go at liberte

Whiche myracle knowen / his frendes and colyns all
Returned agayne with glad mynde and chere
The prisoner mette them louyng god in speciall
And blessed Werburge in his best manere
The deuout citezens approched them nere
Went all to the thyne the virgin thankyng
The belles were tolled for ioy of this thyng

¶ Howe at the maner place of Upton saint Werburge
restrayned wyld^r hoxes from distruction of cornes put
in by they^r ennemys. Cap.xiii.

Alto the thynde season approched to Chestre cite
Many cruell ennemys in the part of Wirall
Purposyng to spoyle / and distroy all the countre
The people and they^r frutes / they^r corne and catall
The citezens dedyng to be captiue and thall
fortified the cite with men of armes bright
Hauynge sure artillarie for to defende and fight

The husbandes of the countrey about there dwelling
Agaynst the sayd ennemys makynge sore prouysion
Brought they^r corne & cattell / their husold^r remaynyng
In assurance to be / to the parke of Upton
Saynt Werburge landes from all distruction
Whiche parke from Upton was distaunt a myle space
A prebende to a chanon of her mynstre and place

These Wyched ennemys fulfilled with malice
Werburge. p.iii.

Agaynst all conscience and ordre of charite
In no maner wise dredynge the hie iustice
Entred the sayd parke with mycle cruelte
Pulled downe the paale at pleasure and liberte
Put in theyr horses made great distruction
Of cornes and catell of a hie presumption

Werburge remembrynge theyr great wychednes
Theyr malice and myschief agaynst her possession
By myracle shewed her power and goodnes
Preseruyng her seruauntes from all vexacion
And punysshynge her ennemies with great affliction
As she hath done many seasons or this
By mean to her spouse our lorde kyng of blis

When the corne sheuys lay broken afore them playne
The horses had no power any part to take
For why? by myracle / theyr heedes all in certayne
Were vpholde in the ayre / theyr bodyes sore dyd quake
They touched no frutes / wast they dyd none make
Of the principall doers / some raged out of mynde
Some smetyn with palsy / some lepre halt and blynde

Whiche punysshement knowen vnto all the host
The rulers and captens without any delaye
Knyt agayne the sheuys / that none shulde be lost
With tremblyng hartes humbly began to praye
This holy virgin to saue them that daye
Upon a condicion / escapyng from payne
Enduryng theyr lyfe neuer to turne agayne

from that tyme furth ther dar^e no nacion

Consydering the power of this birgin pure
 Approchyng Chestre cite to make derogacion
 Denmarke Goet nor Galway scot ye may be sure
 Cruell danes nor walshemen dare nat procure
 Wherfore the citezens haue cause to loue the place
 And thanke this birgin for her helpe and grace

¶ Howe a chanon of Chestre haupng his leg and the
 broken was restaured to helth by saynt Werburge hys
 patronesse. Cap. xiii.

Within Chestre mynstre that holy place
 Dwelled a chanon nominate Alminus
 Sad of disposicion by syngular grace
 Humble and pacient / discrete and vertuous
 Liberall and honest / gentyll and piteous
 And for a pastyme this was his pleasure
 To hunt and to hauke to confort nature

And as this chanon rode for his solace
 On huntynge with other honest company
 By fortune unfrendly / the more pite was
 Both horse and man fell to grounde sodendly
 In perill of theyr lyues standynge in leoperdye
 The horse downe lyenge oppressed the chanon
 Brake his leg a sondre / with blod great effusion

When by his company the chanon was by take
 He fell in a stowne for anguill the wo and payne
 All worldly riches redy to forsake
 For one hour of quietnes to be had agayne
 Unto his macion they brought him certayne
 Werburge. p. iiii.

Where he continued in myle wo and langour
Abdyng allonly the mercy of our sauour

Coūnyng surgeans were sought bpon euery syde
To cure this gentylman from penalite
But none of them / by wysdome coude prouyde
Clerely to heele hym / and do hym remedye
Thus he remediles / in extreme ieopardye
Prayed to saynt Werburge his patronesse
For helth and remedye / of her great goodnesse

Whose humble prayer with inward loue seruent
Was graciously harde of her charite
For right soone after appered euident
A byrde like a doue most clere for to see
Into the chanons chambze the byrde flew trule
Among the company / and anone doubteles
The place was repleit with odour and swetnes

Soone after the company euerichone
Were sadly on slepe a thyng meruaylous
And afore the pacient by playne vision
Saynt Werburge appered in his syght full glorious
Sayeng : my chaplayne and seruaunt bertuous
Why be ye absent from diuine seruice
Nat doyng your dutie accordyng to iustice

Ala dame he sayd / and swete president
It is well knowen to all the cite
Of my myffortune and harmes euident
Howe my horse almost had oppressed me
Wherefore an impotent I endure mysere

It is no feyned cause / that I do expresse
I beseke you of helpe nowe swete maistres

Saynt Werburge euer piteous and merciable
Upon her seruantes in great distresse
Conforted her chaplayne with wordes delectable
Proued in effect by her excellent goodnes
To his syght and felynge as he dyd expresse
She touched the foote / that sore and broken was
Cured it holly from payne by singular grace

When she had cured thus this impotent
Anone she departed out of his syght
The chanon gaue honour to god omnipotent
And to this virgin and lady bygght
Of this gossly bilsion comfort and lyght
All payne was past sekene's beracion
Helth was come by playne probacion

The chanon rose by the same mydnyght
And went to mattens as custome was
His bretherne were glad with all theyr myght
Prayed our lorde of his singular grace
And Werburge patrones of the sayd place
Also with honour reuerence and humilite
The bretherne sange te deum solemle

In A brefe rehersall of certayne kynges / and how kyng
Edgar came to Chestre. Also howe Leofrice Erle of
Chestre repared diuers churches. Cap. xv.

After the deceasse of kyng Edward senour
Ethelstan his sonne was coronate at London

Kyng of this lande regnyng in honour
With power regallite by true succession
Valeant in chivalry and actes euerychone
Subdued danes / scottes / norwages / britons all
Optyeined triumphe / and dignite imperiall

The fourth yere of his reigne / and the yere of grace
viii. hundreth .ii. and seuenty by full computation
Guy erle of Marwike by fortune slayne hase
Colbrond the gyaunt / floure of danes nacion
The sayd kyng Ethelstan by power and renowne
Thries subdued danes / and slewe the kyng of Irelāde
Nominat prince Anlaff as we vnderstande

This noble Ethelstan was good and gracious
To all holy churche / namely to religion
Ryghtfull in iudgement / liberall and piteous
To his true subiectes through his dominion
To mynstres and holy places had great affection
Confirmed theyr foundacions with libertes clere
Whose noble actes be touched a lytell here

*Regia progenies produxit nobile stemma.
Cum tenebris nostris illuxit splendida gemma
Magnus Ethelstanus patrie decus, orbita recti
Illustris probitas a vero nescia flecti.*

After Ethelstan regned Edmund his brothur
foure yeres in honour / haupng great victory
Princis Eled and Edwyn succided eytherothur
In great busines with scottes and danes truly
Next whom meke Edgar / sayth the history
xvi. yere of age / coronate at Kyngston
With peace and quietnes first ruled this region.

In whose naturite the blessed Dunstan
Herde angels singe with mycle melody
Peace is now come to Englande certain
Quietnes / and rest / honour / and victorie
Of cornes and frutes that tyme was plentie
Danes / norwaies / scottes / britons in euery place
Submytted them selfe to the kynges grace

Science encreased true loue and amite
Vertue was exalted in all this region
Monasteries were edified of his benigne
Endowed with riches / and riall possession
xl. religious places by famous opinion
Were newly buylded by the sayd noble kyng
In sondry places of this realme standyng

Secular prestes expelled sothely were
From diuers monasteries with great discrecion
Religious persones repleit with vertue clere
Entred their places cause of deuotion
Charite was feruent and holy religion
The lyues of sayntes were soth in eche place
And written in legendes for our comfort and grace

Many wyppes were made vpon the kynges cost
To serche by the se all his lande about
That no alian entre in no maner cost
By policie and manhod to holde all his ennemies out
Danes / norwaies / scottes durst nat ones loke out
Suche drede all nations had ensuyng the tyme
That kyng Edgar^e regned by prouidence diuine
In progresse he passed ones in the yere
Eche quarter of the realme with his company

To se that his subiectes well ordred were
And the lawe obserued / iustice with mercy
Than was none oppression wronges nor iniury
Debate malice rancour myght nat be founde
True loue and charite was in all the londe

Kynge Edgar^e approached the cite of legions
Nowe called Chestre / specified afore
Where .viii. kynes mette of diuers nations
Redy to gyue Edgare reuerence and honour
Legiance and fidelite depely sworne full soe
At the same cite : after to be obedient
Promyt at his calling to come to his parliament

From the Castell he went to the water of Dee
By a priue posterne through walles of the towne
The kyng toke his barge with mycle rialte
Rowyng bpwarde to the churche of saynt Johfi
The forsayd .viii. kynes with hym went alone
Kynge Edgar^e kept the storne / as most principall
Eche prince had an oze to labour withall

When the kyng had done his pylgrimage
And to the holy roode made oblacion
They entred agayne into the sayd barge
Passyng to his place with great renowne
Then Edgare spake in prayfying of the crowne
All my successours may glad and ioyfull be
To haue suche homage honour and dignite

Also it is to be had in memory
That this sayd Edgar^e and his princis all

Came with great reuerence vnto the monastery
To worshyp saynt Werburge with mynde liberall
Where he gaue fredoms and priuileges speciall
With singular possessions of his charite
Confirmynge the olde grauntes by hye auctorite

This Edgar^o was nominate in cronicles expresse
The floure of Englāde / regnyng as emperour
Lyke wise as Romulus to romains was of prowes
Cyrus to the persis / to the grekes their conquerour
Great Charles to frenchemen / to troians Hectour
Famous in victorie preignant in wyldome
Vertuous and pacient / feruent in deuotion
Henric^o. li^o. v.

Auctor opum vindixit scelerum / largitor honorum
Sceptryger Edgarus regna superna petit.
Hic alter Solomon / legum pater / orbita pacis
Quod claruit bellis / claruit inde magis.
Templa deo / tēplis monachos / monachis dedit agros :
Requitie lapsum / iusticieq; locum.

Also from the byrthe of our blessed sauour
A thousande fyfty yere / and seyn expresse
In the tyme of saynt Edwardē kyng and confessor
As William Maluesbury beareth wytnes
Chan Leofricus a man of great mekenes
Was erle of Chestre and duke of merciens
Son to duke Leoffwin by liniall discence

This noble Leofric sayth policronicon
Of his deuotion and beningne grace

Namely by the counsell and vertues mocion
Of his lady Godith countes whiche was
Reedified churches decayed in many a place
Also he founded the monastery of Leouence
By the towne of Herford / and the place of Wenlece

This erle repared a noble olde monastery
Euesham vpon Auen / gaue them great riches
Also founder was of the abbay in couentre
Made the cite free for loue of his countesse
At the cite of Chestre of his great goodnes
He repared the College churche of saynt Iohn
Endowed it with riches and enormentes many one

This erle of Chestre the sayd Leofricus
Of his charite / and feruent deuocion
To the honour of god / reedified full gracious
The mynstre of Werburge within the sayd towne
Gaue unto it riches and singular possession
Endowed the sayd place with fredoms and liberte
And speciall priuileges confirmed by auctoꝛite

So the sayd place encreased in honour
In great possessions / fredoms / and richesse
With singular deuocion vnto our sauour
And prayle to saynt Werburge theyꝝ patronesse
The chanons obserued vertue and clenness
Daily augmentyng by diuine sufferaunce
Vnto the comyng to this lande of normans

¶ Of the comyng of Willpam conquerour to this lāde
and howe Hug. Lupe his syster sonne was founder of

The yere of grace .M. lxx and thescour
 The .xiii. day of the moneth of october
 The duke of Normandy / William conquerour
 Bight a stronge batell / displayed his baner
 Of normans and frenchemen hauynge great power
 Subdued kyng Harold opteyned all the londe
 Was coronate at London / made sapons all bonde

for diuerse great causes he came to this countre
 first for deth of Alured his nere kynsman
 The proscripcion of Robert archebischop of Cant bury
 The periury of Harold agaynst conscience playne
 The promys of saynt Edward made to hym certayne
 That the sayd William shulde enioye the crowne
 If the kyng departed without succession

A generall counsell was celebrate at London
 That all bysshops sees by helpe of the conquerour
 from borowes shulde be translate to a famous towne
 Within their diocess / to the greater honour
 Ryght so they all were / sayth myn auctour
 Also the see of Lichefeld was translate to Chester
 By helpe and sufferance of the bysshop Peter

With William conquerour came to this region
 A noble worthy prynce nominate Hug. Lupus
 The dukes son of Britayne / and his syster son
 Flourynge in chivalry bolde and victorious
 Manfull in batell / liberall and vertuouse
 To whom the kyng gaue for his enheritaunce

The counte of Cheshhire with the appurtinaunce

**By victorie to wynde the forsayd Erledom
Frely to gouerne it as by conquest right
Made a sure chartre to hym and his succession
By the swerde of dignite to holde it with myght
And to calle a parlement to his wyll and syght
To orde his subiectes after true iustice
As a prepotent prince / and statutes to deuise**

**This baleant knyght with a myghty host
Descended from London to wynde the sayd counte
But the lordes of Cheshhire rose from euery cost
Agaynst hym made batell and had the victorie
Chies they preuayled agaynst the erle trulie
After he optayned to his fame and honour
The erledom of Cheshire entred as a conquerour**

**He gaue to his knyghtes after theyr desire
Lordshyps and franchises / and great possession
With riche mariages within all Cheshhire
Exalted his seruantes to hye promocion
Into holy church had special deuocion
Maynteynge iustice / commendynge vertue
Deposyng vice by the helpe of Jesu**

**After the departure of his vnckle the conquerour
When William Ruff. toke the regalite
Then blessed Anselme the famous doctour
Wyd biset this lande oft tymes of his charite
Glad to refourme / and bynne bnto unite
Where was debate / and mycle diuision**

By diligent labour and good exhortacion

This forsayd erle of his benigne
Interiorly lounge holy religion
Repleit with vertue and feruent charite
Sende for saynt Anselme vnto London
To come to Chestre at his petition
And there for to founde a religious place
In honour of Werburge by diuine grace

Blessed Anselme at the erles supplicacion
Came vnto Chestre with gladde chere shortly
Where he founded an abbaye of holy religion
A pleasaunt place and a noble monasterye
In worshyp of god / and saynt Werburge sothely
The yere of grace by full computacion
A thousande .iiii. score .xiii. yere alon

All secular prestes / and chanons also
Within the sayd place afore tyme dwelling
Were clerely dysmyssed / and letten go
Religious monkes perfect in luyng
Receyued were gladly their rule professyng
Saynt Anselme ordeyned Ric^e of Beccents
To be their abbot with great preeminence

Landes / rentes / libertes / and great possession
Franches / freedoms / and priuileges riall
Were gyuen mekely to that foundacion
Maners / borowes / towne / with the people thall
And many faire churches / chapels withall
Marages and mariages were gyuen that season
Werburge. q.i.

To god and saynt Werburge cause of deuocion

**Kyng Wylliam Ruff. son to the conquerour
Confirmed the foundacion / with great auctorite
Endowed the monastery with mycle honour
Of freedoms / franchises / also liberte
The place that tyme was made as fre
As the sayd erle was in his castell
Or as hert myght thynke / or tonge myght tell**

**Saynt Anselme departed thence vnto London
And was made archebischop of Canturbury
To the place he gaue a sure confirmacion
With singular priuileges to be had in memory
Of whom it is witten here folowynge truly
Hic bir dum birit ertirpantes maledixit
Werburge iura presentia sine futura.**

**This noble prince gaue of his charite
Riall riche enormentes vnto the sayd place
Coopes / crosses / Jewels of great rialte
Chales / censures / bestures / and landes dyd purchase
A librarie of bokes to rede and syng there was
Of whiche riall iewels and bokes some remayne
Within the sayd monastery to this day certayne**

**The founder also buylded within the monastierie
Many myghty places / conuenient for religion
Compased with stronge walles on the west partie
And on the other syde with Walles of the towne
Closed at euery ende with a sure postron
In south part the cimiterie inuironed rounde about**

for a sure defence ennemies to holde out

The .ix. yere afte this riall foundation
This noble founder the .xxvii. day of July
Departed towarde the heuently mancion
Next whom his son Richarde succeeded truly
Than regnyng in honour the first kyng Henry
Also the place had their fraunches and freedom
Afore the sayd cite a hundreth yere and one

¶ Howe saynt Werburge taught her monke and cha-
playne to kepe paciens for his greater merite and glo-
rye to come. Cap. xlii.

After the transacion of Chestre monasterye
From secular chanons to monkes religious
By helpe of Anselme archebisschop of Canturburye
Supportyng therto the founder Hug. Lupus
As afore is specified full memorous
A monke there dwelled of vertuouse disposicion
Under obedience / nominate dan Symon

This brother Simon his tyme well byng
Nowe in vertuouse study / nowe in contemplacion
Nowe in deuout prayer / nowe busely wyttynge
Somtyme in solace / and honest recreation
Observed deuoutly his holy religion
Obedience / pacience / and wysfull pouerte
Akenes / meditacion / with pure chastite

For whiche examples and signes of vertue
Diuers of his bretherne repleit with enuy
Were fully confederate entending to subdue
This honest prest by malice and policy

Werburge.

q.ii.

They layd to his charge open wronges and iniury
They punysshed & oppressed hym with great affliction
Dayly augmentyng by subtyll collusion

Dan Symon offendyng no brother at all
Observed pacience / euer callynge for grace
Weppyn lamentyng with syghes cordiall
His fortune unfrendly remediles / in that case
Entended to depart to some other place
Of a scrupulous conscience / seyng no redresse
Was redy to procede plunged in heuynes

Merburge appered to this monke in vision
Bryghter than Phebus in his meridian spere
His seruaunt she sayd callng hym vpon
Why be ye so sad / and heuy of chere ?
Wheder entende ye ? shewe the mater clere
Alas he sayd ma dame and patronesse
For sorowe I can nat my peynes expresse

Diuers of my bretherne ben greued at me
Terryng me dayly with great tribulacion
Causeles on my part deserued trule
In worde or en dede grynng none occasion
I can nat be quiet amonge that congregacion
Wherefore swete lady vnder your licence
I purpose to departe in sauyng my conscience

Saynt Merburge pacified his mynde and entent
With wordes of comfort and holy scripture
Made hym be humble in hert and pacient
Thy sufferance shalbe great ioye and pleasure

And for thy pacience thou maist be sure
To haue rewarde in blis perpetuall
At thy departure from this lyfe mortall

Wherwith saynt Werburge departed sodeinl
To the blis of heuyn euer enduryng
The monke was meke in hert and mery
Observed her doctrine this lyfe continuyng
Gave good example of perfect luyng
Unto his bretherne / and at his departure
For his pacience passed to eternall pleasure

¶ Howe sondes rose bp within the salt see agaynst Hil
burgher by saynt Werburge at the petition of the con-
stable of Chestre. Ca.xviii.

THe seconde erle of Chestre after the conquest
Was erle Richard / son to Hug. Lupus
Whiche Richarde entended all thyng to the best
To visite saynt Winifride in hert desirous
Upon his iourney went / myn auctour sayth thus
Deuoutly to holy well in pylgrimage
For his great merite and gostly aduantage

When the wicked walshe-men herd of his comyng
After a meke maner vnto that party
They made insurrection inwardly gladdynge
Descended from the mountaynes most furiously
Agaynst the erle raised a cruell company
Byt wxt hym and Chestre lettynge the kyngis way
Purposynge to flee or take hym for a praye
Werburge. q.iii.

The erle son perceyued theyr malicious entent
In all hast possible sende to Chestre secretly
To warne his constable by loue and commaundemt
Wylliam the son of Wigell / to rayse a great army
To mete hym at Batyngwerke right sone and spedely
For his deliuerauce from deth and captiuite
Of the wyld walshemen / without humanite

The constable congregate in all goodly hast
A myghty stronge host / in theyr best arraye
Towarde Hilburghee on iourney ridyng fast
Trustyng vpon shippes all them to conuaye
Whiche was a riall rode that tyme nyght and daye
And whan they theder came shyping none there was
To carie all them ouer in conuenient space

Alas what hert may thynke / or tonge well expresse ?
The dolorous greuaunce / and great lamentacion
That the host made / for loue and tendernes
Knowyng their great maister in suche persecucion
Some wept and wayled without consolacion
Some sighed and sobbed / some were in extasy
Without perfect reason / alas what remedy ?

Wylliam the constable most carefull man on lyue
Of his myffortune in suche extreme necessite
Called to hym a monke there dwellyng contemplatyue
Required hym for counsaile and prayer for his charite
The monke exhorted hym to knele vpon his kne
Dumblie to beseke Werburge his patronesse
For helpe and remedy in suche great distresse

The constable content anone began to praye
O blessed Werburge and virgin pure
I beseeke the mekely helpe me this day
That we may transcende this ryuer safe and sure
To saue and defende my lord from discomfiture
And here I promytte to god and the alone
To offre to the a gyfte at my comyng whome

Whiche prayer ended with wepyng and langour
Beholde and consyde well with your gostly ee
The infinite goodnes of our saviour
For like as to Moyses deuided the redde see
And the water of Jordan obeyed to Josue
Ryght so the depe riuer of Dee made diuision
The sondes dyre appered in syght of them echone

The constable consyderynge / and all the company
This great myracle transcendyng nature
Praised and magnified our lord god almyghty
And blessed Werburge the virgin pure
They went into wales bpon the sondes sure
Deliuered their lord from drede and enmite
Brought hym in safe garde agayne to Chestre cite

The sayd Wyllyam constable came to the monasterye
Thanked saynt Werburge with meke supplicacion
Fulpylled his promes made in extremite
Offred to the place the village of Neuton
Afterwarde he founded the abbay of Norton
And where the host passed / ouer betwix bondes
To this day ben called the constable sondes

T Howe Matild, countesse of Cheshire counselleng her
husband, agaynst the monastery of Cheshire was dow-
ned at Barlewe with many other mo. Cap. xix.

After the decesse of Hug. Lupe prenominate
Richard, his son .bii. yeres of age
Was elect Erle by the kyng and creat
With counsaile gouerned his landes and heritage
At yeres of discrecion he toke in mariage
The lady Matild / nece to the first kyng Henry
Doughter to erle Stephan (sayth the history)

At his begynnyng he was a benefactour
A founder to the place by landes and possession
By franchises and libertes / ayde / helpe / and succour
Gyuen to the abbay / augmentyng the foundation
Proued by his actes of singular deuocion
Enduryng long tyme / tyll that his lady
By wycked counsaile moued hym the contrarpe

It is red in scripture howe quene Iesabell
Ambitious of honour agaynst all ryghtousnes
Peruerted her lorde Ahas / kyng of Israell
To sle Nabath for his vineyard doubles
Also Athalia / the bible sheweth expresse
Commaunded to sle the kynges children all
That she myght regne sole princeesse imperiall

Ryght so this Matild, clerely refusyng
The steppes of Sara / Rebecca / and Rachell
And other good matrons : but mutacion takyng
Of these wycked women Athali and Iesabell

Peruerted her husbände by her subtyll counsell
To aske of the abbot the maner place of Salton
With the appurtinaunce by famous opinion

Thabbot by counsell of his bretherne all
Denyed to graunt their propre possession
The patrimony of Christ and their landes seuerall
To the sayd erle Richarde and his succession
Gyuen by his father at the first foundacion
For whiche thyrng the erle and Matild, his lady
Hated thabbot / his bretherne / and the monastery

The erle and his countesse went to Normandy
To viset their frendes and colyns naturall
So dyd the pryncis / their father kyng Henry
With many estates of the blodde riall
These pryncis fauored no saxon at all
The erle conominat in malice and hate
Agaynst the monasterye / as a man endurete

Satan sende forth his seruauntes in hast
To infect the erles hert with venomous poison
The bedyls of Belial attempted full fast
The erle and his countesse / to kepe theyr opinion
Detractours flaterers cause of promocion
Trustyng therby to opteyne fauour and grace
Excited their myndes agaynst the sayd place

The erle fore attempted by his gossly enemy
By wycked people callng hym vpon
Namely by the counsell of Matild, his lady
Entended to alter and chaunge the foundacion
Werburge

Of the sayd abbay to a nother religion
Confirmed the same sweryng most depely
At his whom comyng to Englande / from Normandy

Chabbot and couent knowyng this great perell
By speciall louers and frendes secretly
Were penyue and sorowfull (it was no meruell)
Their hertes plunged in wo and misery
By naturall reason hauyng no remedy
Consydering his malice encreased more and more
Agaynst the monastery / with wordes of rigour

They had their hope trust and confidence
In blessed Werburge their patronesse
With wepyng eyes clere in conscience
They called her vpon in all their distresse
O glorious virgin lady and swete maistres
Mitigate the malice by thy benignite
Of Richarde our lorde / mekely we praye the

Suffre hym neuer to distrope thy place
By wycked consell malice and enuy
Founded and dedicate by heuenly grace
In honour of god / and the specially
Protect / defende / and saue thy monastery
Thy landes / thy libertes / and thy seruauntes all
As thou afore tyme hast done continuall

In meane tyme the erle entended spedely
From thens to depart / and retourne agayne
To fulfyll his entent agaynst the monasterye
By the subtyll mocion of his countesse playne

A ship was prepared / all thyng redy certayne
The prince of England / the erle and his lady
Toke shippynge at Barflewe and all their comp

Certaynly they sayled but a lytell space
Whan agaynst them roose a contrarie wynde
The mariners to gyde the ship had no grace
The stormes so great hideous agaynst kynde
On a rocke they ranne / no remedy myght fynde
Incontinently the ship barst all in sondre
The erle and his feliship were turned all undre

No man ne childe scaped from deth that tyme
But one pore seruaunt whiche swamme to the londe
Suche was theyr fortune by sufferaunce diuyn
Many of theyr bedis were neuer fonde
Thus was their power made thall and bonde
Theyr lyues were lost within a lort space
Whiche were cruell ennemys bnto her place

On saynt Katharins day at after mydnyght
Whan matens were ended / and bretherne gon
Some mournyng waylyng for drede full ryght
Some busie in prayer and contemplacion
Werburge appered to the seccristan alone
Sayenge : ye may be ioyfull in god and mery
Erle Richarde is drowned your mortall ennemy

The same glad tidyng she wed an honest woman
Tollyng at the churche dore the sayd day and hour
As she was commaunded by Werburge incertan
To thabbot and couent plunged in great langour
Werburge. r.ii.

(Whiche myracle herde) they prayed our sauour
And blessed Werburge / with hert deuoutly
Syngyng Te deum full solemly

T Howe a great fire like to distroye all Chestre by my-
racle ceased / whan the holy shyne was borne about the
towne by the monkes. Cap.xx.

From the incarnation of our sauour
A thousand / a hundreth yere .lxxx. also
On sonday in mydleton / the .viii. hour^e
Whan euery parsshien theyr churche went to
As all christen people of dutie shulde do
A fyre by infortune rose up sodeinly
All flamyng feruent or the people dyd espy

This fearefull fire encreased more and more
Piteously wastyng hous / chambre / and hall
The citezens were redy their cite to succour
Shewed all their diligence / and labour continuall
Some cried for water / and some for hookes dyd call
Some bled other engins by crafte and policy
Some pulled downe howses afore the fire truly

Other that were impotent / mekely gan praye
Our blessed lorde / on them to haue pite
Women and children cried out and waile away
Beholdyng the daunger and perill of the cite
Prestes made hast diuine seruice to supple
Redy for to succour their neyghbours in distress
(As charite required) and helpe their heurnes

The fire continued without any cessyng
feruently flamyng euer continuall
from place to place meruaylously rennyng
As it were tynder consuming toure and wall
The citezens sadly laboured in bayne all
By the policie of man was founde no remedy
To cesse the fire so feruent and myghty

Alas great heuynes it was to beholde
The cite of Troye all flamyng as fire
More pite of Rome cite was manyfolde
feruently flagrant / empeiryng the empire
As to the quantite the cite of Chestre
Myght be assembled this tyme in like case
To the sayd citees remedeles alas

Many riall places fell adowne that day
Riche marchauntes houses brought to destruction
Churches and chapels went to great decay
That tyme was bent the more part of the towne
And to this present day is a famous opinion
Howe a myghty church a mynstre of saynt Michael
That season was bent and to ruyne fell

When the people sawe their power insufficient
By diligent labour / wysdome and policie
To subdue the fire / but styll dyd augment
To almyghty god they dyd call and crye
And to saynt Werburge the gracious lady
for helpe and succour in suche wretchednes
Weeping and waylyng for woo and heuynes
Werburge. r.iii.

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for helpe and succour in such wretchednes
Weeping and waylyng for woo and heuynes
Werburge. r.iii.

Chabbot and couent of the sayd monasterie
Religiously lyving in holy conuersacion
Repleit with mekenes and feruent charite
Toke the holy thyne in prayer and deuocion
Syngyng the letanie bare it in procession
Compasyng the fyre in euery strete and place
Trustyng in Werburge for helpe aide and grace.

When they had ended the holy letanye
From place to place procedyng in stacion
Anone a stremyng sterre appered todaynlye
A white doue descended afore the congregacion
Approchyng as to helpe them / a signe of consolacion
The people reioysed of that gossly syght
And prayled saynt Werburge with power and myght

So by the merite of this blessed birgin
The fire began to cesse / a myracle clere
That passyng the place / where the holy thyne
Was borne by the betherne / as playnly dyd appere
The citezens dyd helpe in their best manere
The feruent great fire extincted was in dede
By grace aboue nature / in story we may rede

The clergie the burges / and the comons all
Consydeyng the goodnes of this birgin bright
With tendernes of hert and loue in speciall
Magnified and prayled our lorde god almyght
And blessed Werburge by day also nyght
Whiche hath preserued of her great charite
Thestre from distruction in extreme necessite

Unto her hymne the people all went
 The clergie before in maner of procession
 Thankyng this birgin with loue feruent
 For her mercy and grace shewed them vpon
 Deuoutly knelynge there made oblacion
 Sayeng full sadly / we shall neuer able be
 The place to recompence for this dede of charite

A breue reherfall of the myracles of saynt Werburge
 after her translacon to Chestre. Cap. xxi.

These foresayd myracles and signes celestiaall
 By diuine sufferance shewed manifestly
 Magnificen this birgin and blessed moiniaall
 With mycle worthyp honour and victory
 Playnly declaryng vnto your memory
 What singular grace / worthyp / and excellence
 Our sauour shewed for his spouse openly
 As is reherfed at masse in her sequens

To expresse all myracles written in the place
 In a boke nominate the thrid passionarpe
 It wolde require a longe tyme and space
 To the reders tedious (no meruayle sothly)
 Where we omytte to writte of them specially
 But touched in generall vnto your audience
 To reioyse and comfort your hertes inwardly
 As ye may conside in her sequens

Certaynly it is knowen by bokes expresse
 Sith that saynt Werburge came to Chestre cite
 By the power of god and myracle doutles
Werburge. r. iiii.

She hath defended the towne from ennemite
From barbarike nacions full of crudelite
Of whom we haue shewed with diligence
Preseruyng her seruauntes / and the monastery
As is declared in her true sequence

Also of her goodnes preserved she hase
The sayd towne from fire in extreme necessite
Many diuers tymes to their ioye and solace
Reluyng the citezens in wo and penalite
For it is well known by olde antiquite
Sith the holy shryne came to their presence
It hath ben their comfort and gladnes truly
As playnly appereth in her sequens

Also to blynde men she hath gyuen syght
To dombe men speche right perfectly
To desse men their herying pleasaunt and right
And helth to sicke men repleit with debilitie
Delyuered prisoners from captiuite
Passage to lame men / to mad men intelligence
Suche myracles shewed this blessed lady
As ye may vnderstande in her sequens

Wlomen with childe by her had good delyueraunce
Virgins defended from shame and bilany
Her seruauntes were cured from wofull greuaunce
Marchantes and mariners delyuered from ieopardye
Other were saued from hangyng shamfully
A speciall comfort succour and defence
To all carefull creatures sekynge for remedy
By singular grace / as sayth the sequens

No wofull person in payne and wretchednes
Man woman childe / who so euer they be
Comynge to the abbay with perfit mekenes
Makynge supplicacion to this ladye free
But they departed ioyful and merie
To theyr dwelllyng place by her beniuolence
And for their lyuyng had all thyng necessarie
As written is playnly in her sequens

for whiche great myracles and signes continuall
This blessed Werburge floure of humilite
Of the people is called for grace supernall
Patrones of Chestre / protectrice of the countre
Where next our sauour and his mother Marie
She hath great honour mayle and preeminence
As most condigne to beare the principalite
In witnes wherof recordeth her sequens

This holy abbasse and lady imperiall
Hath ben president in Chestre monasterie
Theyr trust / theyr treasure / and defence speciall
In mycle reuerence .xii. hundreth yere trulie
And so shall continue by grace of god almyghty
To the worldes ende in hie magnificence
To whom be honour worship and glorie
Euer to endure / as sayth her sequens

¶ A charitable mocion and a desyre to all the inhaby-
tauntes within the countie palatine of Chestre for the
monasterie.

Cap. xxi.

Ye worthy nobles of the west partye
 Considre in your mynde with hye discrecion
 The perfitte goodnes of this swete ladye
 We mean saynt Werburge nowe at this season
 Whiche hath ben your helpe and singular tuicion
 And so euer wylbe / haue this in your mynde
 When ye to her call with humble supplicacion
 Therefore to the monasterye be neuer unkynde

Remembre / at the foundation of the sayd place
 your predeceffours and forefathers redy were
 To gyue for their soule helth by singular grace
 Parcell of their landes and possessions mere
 To our sauour and to saynt Werburge clere
 Redy to offre them with humble hert and mynde
 In perfit oblacion with Hug. Lupe their foundere
 Therefore to the monasterie be neuer unkynde

Many helde their landes of the sayd monasterie
 By tenure grand seriant / and some by homage
 By tenur^e franke almoigne / other by fealtie
 With seruite de chivaler^e / and some by escuage
 Some by petit seriant / and by tenur^e burgage
 As in their euidentes and grauntes they may fynde
 Tres maners de rentes / with tenur^e billenage
 Therefore to the monasterie be neuer unkynde

The place hath speciall franchises and liberte
 Hauyng certayne wardes of landes and mariage
 Of diuers gentilmen within the sayd counte
 All theyr ternauntes and seruauntes haue fre passage
 Within all cheshire without tolle and pillage

Suche auncient fredoms in their dedes they fynde
Gyuen by theyr founders for goffly awauntage
Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer bnynde

The erle gave the place many great fredoms
Within Chestre cite / whiche ben knowen of olde
With singular priuileges and auncient customs
Saynt Werburge faire / with profites manyfolde
That no marchandise shulde be bought ne tolde
Enduryng the faire days (in wrytyng as we fynde)
But afore thabbay gate / to haue and to holde
Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer bnynde

Therfore lordes barons / ye rulers of the countre
We you now exhorde in our sauour
Discretly conside with your gofflie eie
The myght of this mayden and chaste flour
Shewed by myacles euery day and hour
Whan she was required with true hert and mynde
In all busines she hath ben their protectour
Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer bnynde

Whan your forefathers haue ben in great perell
In ieoperdie of lyfe on see and on londe
Or like to be slayne by ennemies in batell
Or taken by warr^e in prizon fast bonde
Unto this virgin / as we understonde
Whan they called and cryed with contrite mynde
They escaped all daunger / cam whom safe and sonde
Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer bnynde

Marchauntes passynge with marchandise

From lande to lande truly entending
If they were taken with cruell ennemye
Dreles were put in perill of perishing
If they to this birgin deuoutly praying
Made supplicacion with humble hert and mynde
Anone they opteyned theyr humble asking
Wherefore to the monasterie be neuer unkynde

If any of you beered with infirmite
With sekenes incurable / or other vexacion
As wronges iniuries and other maladie
Unto saynt Werburge makyng intercession
And to her place promysyng an oblacion
With contrite hert and penitent mynde
They were soone cured from all affliction
Wherefore to the monasterie be neuer unkynde

And you honest matrons remembre you all
The goodnes of this birgin full of grace
When ye in trauelyng vpon her do call
Or haue any relique sende from the place
Ye fortune and spede well in short tyme and space
And diuers maydens louyng a chaste mynde
From vilany ben saued by her purchase
Wherefore to the monasterie be neuer unkynde

But eche contray / shire / and congregacion
Some be disposed to vertues generall
And some to the contrarie proued by reason
Following their mynde and appetite sensuall
Haue shewed unkyndnes to the place spirituall
And haue ben sore punyshed / take this in mynde

To all other folowynge and example speciall
Wherfore to the monastery be neuer bnynde

Ther was neuer man of high nor lowe degree
Lorde / baron / knyght / marchaunt / and burges
Attemptyng to infringe their rightes and liberte
Remaynyng in the same malice and wychednes
But if they repent shortly theyr busynes
Askyng absolucion to theyr conscience blynde
Vengeance on them doth lyght doutles
Wherfore to the monastery be neuer bnynde

Diuers malefactours agayne good conscience
Attemptyng to take there seuerall possession
By subtell policy and wrong feyned euidens
By proued periury and fals collusion
Whiche in theyr iniury and wronge mespysion
Without repentans in theyr consciens blynde
Sodenly haue ben mowed a sharpe punyction
Wherfore to the monastery be neuer bnynde

Other haue be glad to alienat the patronage
Of certayne churches by malice and enuy
By a fals enquest for theyr owne awauntage
Defraudyng the right of the holy monastery
Suche euill doers remaynyng in theyr tyranny
Without satisfaccion in their consciens blynde
Lyke wretches expired moste myserably
Wherfore to the monastery be neuer bnynde

Other haue ben besy serching day and nyght
To infringe theyr fraunchis and fridome auncient

By fals recordes oppugnant to ryght
As hath ben proued by persones indifferent
yet theȝ haue procured and sought wronge iugement
Agaynst their libertes in conscience blynde
Sodayne and euyll deth folowed them consequent
Wherfore to the monasterye be neuer bnynde

Some other haue be parauenture on late
Studious to disquiet the place the company
And diuers libertes haue alienate
Also tolled their franchis fraudulently
From the sayd place well knowen in memory
Suche mysdoers we moue in conscience blynde
To maende their wronges lest payne come sodeynly
Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer bnynde

Suche malefactours confide nat discretly
Howe all suche landes libertes and fredoms
Were gyuen to Christ and ben his patrimonye
And nat allonly to religious persons
For all suche fraunches priuileges possessions
Of charite were gyuen of pure conscience and mynde
To god and saynt Werburge with great deuotions
Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer bnynde

Nowe for to make a small conclusion
We well perceyue in auncient bokes olde
All suche transgressours / holdyng their opinion
Obstinate in malice indurate and bolde
Some haue ben slayne / some drowned in water colde
Some shamfully hanged rebukyng their kynde
Some wretchedly departed / some cruciat manyfolde
Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer bnynde

A litell orison or prayer to the blessed birgine saynte
Merburge by the translatour of this werke. Ca.xiii.

Blessed Merburge and birgin glorious
Descended by auncetrie of blod victoriall
Doughter to kynge Aulfer^e / and Dymenild^e vertuous
O sufferayne lady and famous moyniall
With hert and true mynde on the I call
Thou art my succour / my helpe in all distress
Defende and saue me from peynes infernall
By thy meke prayer swete patrones

O rutilant gemme clerer than the cristall
O redolent rose repleit with suauite
Whiche for the loue of thy spouse eternall
Refused hast all vayne pleasures transetore
Honours / riches / and secular dignite
Howe regnyng in heuyn as a quene doutles
Praye for thy seruaunt to the lorde of mercy
Meekely I beseke the swete patronesse

O sufferayne lady full of singular bertue
Myndyng most religion from thy infancy
Elect to the a spouse our sauour Jesu
Professed obedience at the house of Ely
Where thou obserued the sensualls the
By grace aboue nature playn to expresse
O pteyne me power to haue victory
Ageynst myn ennemyes swete patrones

O floure of birgins and comly creature
Syngyng with angels in the heuenly toure

Transcendyng the saphir and diamounde pure
In worship praisyng beaute and decur
What tong can reherse thy ioy and honour
Whiche is ineffable for man to expresse
Beseeke thy spouse our bleddyd sauour
To graunte me mercy swete patrones

For thy great vertu and hie discrecion
Chosen thou was a pyler here to be
Of diuers monasteryes to encrease religion
By thy godly doctryne and humilite
Exsample thou gaue of perfite charite
Unto thy subgettis as a kynde maistres
Helpe me thy seruaunt of thy benignite
To please my maker swete patrones

No maruell it was thought thy subgettis all
Were vertuous and perfect in contemplacion
Under suche a ruler a hed and principall
Whose godly exsample and exortation
Were correspondent accordyng in one
Thy precept and deed were knit with mekenes
In this bale misery be my protection
I humble the require swete patrones

Glorious abbasse and floure of chastite
Carboncle shenyng bothe day and nyght
All this region by thy noble progenie
And by the is decorat vnder god almyght
The presens of thy bleddyd body right
Reioisith thy seruauntis in all distres
Thou art our refuge and lanterne of light

Succour thy seruauntes swete patrones

O pereles princes lady imperiall
O gemme of holynes and noble president
Comfort to all creatures in paynes thall
Releuyng all secke feble and impotent
A myrrour of mekenes to euery pacient
Whose myracles magnifyen thy great goodnes
Defende thy seruaunt from greuous turment
By thy supplicacion swete patronesse

O noble sufferayne and singular protectrice
Of thy true subiectes by speciall grace
In all necessite a sure mediatrice
From greuous oppression preseruyng thy place
A lanterne of lyght in eche wofull case
To illumine thy people plunged in heurynes
With great consolacion and goddly solace
Nowe lyghten our conscience swete patronesse

Swete louely lady mekely **I**f the praye
For thy great mekenes and perfect charite
Make thou intercession both nyght and day
For thy true seruauntes vnto the trinite
That we may opteyne here grace and mercy
And of our synne to haue forgyuenes
Afterwarde to come to eternall glorie
Helpe nowe and euer swete patronesse

A breue cōclusion of this litell werke vnto the reders
by the translatour.
Werburge

Cap. xxiii.
l. i.

With tremblinge penne and hand full of dede
In termes rude translate nowe haue we
The noble hystorie of saynt Werburge in dede
Besekyng all them for their good humanite
Whiche this litell proces shall beholde and se
For to adde and minishe and cause reformation
Where nede requireth after your discrecion

At her lyfe hystoriall example may take
Every great estate / quene / duchess / and lady
To encrease in vertue / and synne to forsake
To obserue mekenes and prayer deuoutly
With pacience of hert / and almesdede truly
If thou be widowe / her lyfe well folowynge
Thou mayst be sure in blis to haue a wonnyng

If thou be religious / wearyng blacke vesture
Take good example at this holy abbasse
Her lyfe wyll teche the how thou shult endure
In holy religion / opteynyng mycle grace
With mekenes / meditacion / mesure in eche place
And howe thou shalt kepe thy sensuall the
Consideryng in heuen thy rewarde to be

If thou be a virgin of hie or low degre
Takyng imitation of this virgin bright
Thou mayst well obserue the floure of chastite
And thy spouse shalbe the lorde most of myght
On whom if thou attende redy day and nyght
Thou shalt haue merite as recordeth scripture
With .b. wise virgins after thy departure

The cause mouryng vs this werke to begyn
It was to auoyde slouth and idelnes
And most for the loue of this holy virgin
Whiche is our sufferayn lady and patrones
As for baudy balades full of wretchednes
And wanton wylde gestis / we purpose none to make
For drede of lolyng tyme / clothed in besture blaie

Go forth litell boke / Jesu be thy spede
And saue the alway from mytreportyng
Whiche art compiled for no clerke in dede
But for marchaunt men / hauryng litell lernyng
And that rude people therby may haue knowyng
Of this holy virgin / and redolent rose
Which hath ben kept full longe tyme in close

To all auncient poetes litell boke submytte the
Whilom flouryng in eloquence facundious
And to all other / whiche present now be
Fyrst to maister Chaucer / and Ludgate sentencious
Also to preighnaunt Barkley / nowe beyng religious
To inuenture Skelton and poet laureate
Praye them all of pardon both erly and late

If there be any thyng within this litell boke
Pleasaunt to the audience / contentyng the mynde
We praye all reders / whan they thereon do loke
To gyue thankes to god maker of mankynde
Nat to the translatour ignoraunt and blynde
For euery good dede / done in any cost
It cometh allonly of the holy gost.

Merburge.

l.ii.

Almyghty god both one two and thre
We desire the with humble supplicacion
Saue holy churche of thy benigneite
And all ministres in holy religion
Preserue the kyngis grace the Peeris the region
Defende our monasterie and thy seruantes all
And graunt vs by grace to come to blis eternall
finis.

A balade to the auctour.

O thou disciple of Cully most famous
Howe flourishyng in the floures of glorious eloquēce
Like as appereth by your stile facundius
Full worthe laude prayse and preeminence
Put forth your werkes full sure of sentence
Whose auctour / what though vncertayne be his name
Of all the reders exalted shalbe in fame

Alas why shulde this delicious werke
Thus surely sette by pyred science
To be examined by my rudenes all derke
Whiche knowe full well myn insufficiēce
Sith I haue lerned by longe experience
That dulled age in werkes of poetry
Must nedes geue to poetes place and victorie

Glorious god and kyng eternall
We magnifie thy name as is but ryght
Sith thou gaue to vs a floure most riall
Redolent in cronicles with historicall syght
Whiche nowe is departed from this temporall lyght
The present pere of this transacion
M. D. xiii. of Christis incarnation
Culus anime propicietur deus.

An other balade.

O frutesfull hystore / o digne memorie
Embawmed with doctrine of vertues infinite
With termes exquisite / and sence retoyall
To spirituall hertes a singular delite
Fragrant and facunde / of englishe exquisite
Hollome in doctrine / for those that it desire
Auaunce you to rede it / for it is exquisite
Folowyng the effect to kepe you from hell fire

Reioyse Chestre / reioyse ye religious
And thanke your maker of his beniuolence
That hath you gyuen suche treasure precious
Aduocatrice / in your most indigence
O virgin werburge / of double excellence
Conserue thy seruantes dayly famulier
Preseruyng them from inconuenience
The for tensue / that art theyr lode sterre

Amonges the whiche to thyn honour
One of thy clientes / with morall retorique
Hath chaunged newly / o mayde most swete flour
Thy legende latine / to our language publique
Preserue his soule / and make hym domestique
Within the heurys / in whiche that thou art sonke
With deth preuent / he myght nothyng replique
Harry Braddeshaa of Chestre abbay monke

O cruell deth / o thesse vindicatyfe
To persons vertuouse enemy mortall
Of this good clerke thou hast abbregeed the lyfe
Preuentyng hym with thy dede stronge fatall

yet in despite of thy most venomous gall
He hath translate this legende profitable
And left it for hollesome memoriall
To all his sequaces / a gyft most couenable

With polished termes / and good sence litterall
No place there boyde / but vertue aboundeth
The effect is manifest : for science ouer all
Rhetorically thy sentence groundeth
All vices surely it confoundeth
She wyng the legende of this mayde pure
Her thenyng lyfe eche where redoundeth
Suche steppes folowynge / we hope in them tendure

An other balade to saynt werburge
With hert contrite accepte my supplication
Apyng my fraylete and lyfe vacillaunt
Renegate and contumace in all obstinacion
Bewmpt with all synne / detestable and recreaunt
Touchsafe to supplie Jesu and geat graunt
Remysion to haue of my synnes generall
Breuous and thral / that I may the auaunt
A gentill Werburge / to thy doctrine me call

Wherefore thy father / thy mother Ermenild,
Enclined both to dedes catholique
Ruffine and Kenrede / thy betherne were fulfild,
Both with great grace / through martyrdome both like
With diuers of thy hymne magnifique
Redact in the catholique papall
Geat me suche grace to boyde all synnes inique
And gentill Werburge to thy doctrine me call

With faithfull clemmes / thy soule was sure preserved
Euer contynuyng in doctrine celicall
Refusyng banite / from vertue neuer swarued
But in all grace remainyng principall
Unto thy deth exhortyng great and small
Ruled to be / to the preceptes diuine
Gouerned by grace / were thy disciples all
A gentill Werburge call me to suche doctrine

Worldly felicitye abiect from my courage
Enuy and pride / with lustes voluptuous
Rancorous cupidite myn hert sore do adwage
Byng oymntes sanatiue for my sores dolorous
Enclose thy succours / and be beniuolous
Redy to be preseruyng me from pyne
Gouerne my lyfe from all actes daungerous
And gentill Werburge call me to thy doctrine

Be nowe beniuolent / whan I shall on the call
Unto thy slaue / as my trust hath ben sure
Leue vnto me for a memoriaill
Knowlege effectuall of thy lyfe pure
Lpyng ther after / and so tendure
Euer in purite my lyfe to contynue
yeldyng thankes for thy most hollesome lurre
Christ ouer vs holde his hande / al vices teschue. Amē.

¶ And thus endeth the lyfe and hystorye of saynt Wer-
burge. Imprinted by Richarde Wynson / printer to the
kynges noble grace / With priuilege to hym graunted
by our souerayne lord the kyng. A. M. D. xxi.



GLOSSARY.



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GLOSSARY.

This Glossary is not intended so much to explain, as to exhibit in a tabular form those words now nearly obsolete which were in use at the time the poem was written.

A.

ACCEPTRE, accepted, 80.
 ADREDD, alarmed, 160.
 AGO, agone, gone, 116.
 ALBE, (tunic?) a white vesture ordered to be worn by the clergy in administering the eucharist, 154.
 ALIENAT, alienated, 203, 204.
 ALLONLY, all only, only, 174, 204, 209.
 AMPLIAT, enlarged, 148.
 ANENDES, anent, in reference to, 100.
 AT AFTER, after, 95, 193.
 ATTEMPTED, tempted, 191.
 ATTEMPTEN, plural of attempt, 100.
 AUDACITY, courage, 2.

B.

BEFOUND, found, 8.
 BEN, be, are, 1, 75, 111, 117, 134, 151, 186, 189, 202, 204.
 BENESON, benediction, 90.
 BESEKE, beseech, 189.
 BESELY, busily, 1.
 BESYNES, business, 2.
 BORDE, "high board lord," those seated at the upper table at a feast, 60.
 BOTH TWO, both the one and the other, 15, 57, 58.
 BOWNE, bent, prepared, 162.
 BRENNED, burned, 34, 39, 49, 139, 141.

BRENT, burnt, 60.
 BRUTES, uncivilised people, 149, 152.
 BROWDRED, embroidered, 60.
 BUXUM, obedient, 1.
 BYFORNE, before, 38.

C.

CADUCE, frail, feeble, 115, 118.
 CANABY, canopy, 146.
 CARLE, churl, clown, 38.
 CELEBRATE, celebrated, 146, 181.
 CELICALL, heavenly, 213.
 CEMETERIE, 151, 184.
 CESSE, to stop, verb act. 195.
 CHERE, countenance, 102.
 CHEST, coffin, 125.
 CIRCUMFULCED, surrounded by brightness, 76, 150, *circumfulgeo*.
 CLERKE, educated persons, 4, 209.
 CLYPPED, called, 32.
 COMEN, plur. of come, 128, 144.
 COMPULACON, computation, 5.
 CONDIGNE, worthy, 199.
 CONGREGATE, congregated, 188.
 CONOMINAT, akin, 191.
 CONSECRATE, consecrated, 93.
 CONYNGE, skill, 134.
 CORONATE, crowned, 115, 144, 147, 158, 175, 176, 181.
 CORPORACE, corporate, a linen cloth spread under the chalice and paten at the eucharist, 154.

GLOSSARY.

COST, charge, also, side, 177, 182.
COSTY, a son coté, on his side, 164.
COSYNS, kinsmen generally, 25, 170, 171, 191.
COTIDIAN, daily, 80, 143.
COUNCEYLED, concealed, 45.
COUNTERED, encountered, 9.
COVETYSE, covetousness, 2.
CREATE, created, 2, 190.
CREATURE, creator, 1, &c. &c.
CRUCIATE, tormented, 101; 166, 204.
CRUELITY, cruelty, 198.
CUBICLE, bedchamber, 1, 77.
CUP, "to sit between the cup and the wall," probably a common term for a drunkard, 2.
CURE, a care or charge; as of a parish, &c. 54, 87, 107.

D.

DAN, master. 185, 186, from Dominus.
DARING, suffering pain, 98, from dare, pain. *Bailey's Dict.*
 Dredefully daringe, i. e. slinking along for fear, as if they would hide themselves, from view.
 "The dere, in the dellun,
 They droupen and daren."
Anturs of Arthur at the Tarnewathelan.
 "In this dale I droupe and dare.
 For dern dedes that done me dere."—*Minst.*
 "Now or thai darend all for drede,
 That war before so stout and gay."—*Ibid.*
 "Blotir," to squat, skowke, ly close to the ground like a daring larke, or afrighted fowle.—*Cotgrave.*
DECORATE, decorated, 75, 96, 120, 126, 206.
DECAUR, 146, decur, 206, honour.
DEDICATE, dedicated, 104.
DEPAYRED, decayed, 125, deperir, *Fr.* dispendere, *Lat.*

DEROGATION, damage, 173.
DESCRYBEN, plur. of describe, 8.
DESCRYPTYON, for destruction, 97.
DESIDERY, desire, 56, 108.
DESSE, high desse, seat of state, 61.
DEVYRE, devoir, respect, 25, 58, 126.
DIGHT, clothed, 144.
DOLOUR, grief, 167.
DO WAY, begone, put aside, 67, 83.
DONE, plur. of do, 67.
DYFFERRE, defer, delay, 30.
DYGNE, worthy, 109, 152, 211.
DYLATED, magnified, published, 9, 75, 96, 150, 168.
DYLECTACYON, delight, 27, 155.
DYSPENT, spent, 94.
DYVERSITY, dissension, 89.
DYVYDENT, dividing, 8, 10.

E.

EDIFIED, built, from edifier, *Fr.* 151, 153, 158, 177.
ELECTE, elected, 85, 93, 159, 190.
ELEVATE, raised up, 48, 125, 126, 161.
EMPAIRED, injured, 160.
EMPEIRYNG, inflaming? 195.
ENDURATE, hardened, cruel, 159, 191.
ENFORCE, strengthen, 34.
ENORMENTES, ornaments, 154, 156, 165, 180, 184.
ENOWNED, inurned, environed, 127.
ENQUIRED, for required, 80.
ENSUING, pursuing, 41; during, 177.
EQUIPOLENT, of equal power, 11.
EQUIVALENT, proportional, 167.
EXPULSE, expel, 6, 88, 111, 121, 142, 151, 152, 177.
EXTINCTED, extinguished, 196.

F.

FACUNDE, 211.
FACUNDIOUS, eloquent, 209, 210.

GLOSSARY.

FEMINITY, womanhood, 61.

FERE, 76; in fere, 11, 59, 164, together in company. See Chaucer, Cant. Tales, v. 4748, 4814. Ang. S. *foera, fera, socius*.

FERRER, far, 63.

FISNAMY, physiognomy, 103, 126.

FLOURES OF EXPERIENCE, of approved worth, 5.

FLOURYNGE, flourishing, 9, 23, 34, 135, 181, 209.

FOLLOWEN, follow, 97.

FRAGYLL, light, vain, 81, 103.

FRAGLYTE, light conduct, 69.

FRAYLTE, inconstancy of mind, 3.

G.

GALWAY SCOT, Scotch from Galloway, 173.

GALWEDY, Galloway, from mediæval Latin word, Gallovidia, 162.

GATE, road, at no gate, no where, by no means, 89.

— got, begot, 11, 12, 13, 14, 91, 118.

GAUNTES, Gannets, or any geese, 97, 98.

GEAF, perhaps from gavel, progenies masculine; vide Skinner in voc. forens. Geaf therefore seems here to mean male descendant; of his eldest son Shem descending plain, i. e. in Saxon's tongue, geaf, 14.

GEAT, get, 212.

GLEBE, earth, soil, 9; vital glebe, mortal body, 129.

GOET, Goths, 173.

GOTES, Goths, 140, 162. Goets and Gotes, being used in connection with Danes, probably means Goths; but as they are also used with Galway and Galwedy, they may refer to the Manxmen, who at one time possessed Galloway.

GRAFFE, graft, shoot, 75.

GUERDON, recompence, deserts, 84.

H.

HAD UPON, placed upon, 49.

HALLYNGE, auleum, hangings, 61; "An hallynge, auleum, anabatrū, *Versus*. Vela vel aulæa cortinæ sunt anabatra." Catholicon anglicanum MS. Dict. in-edited, dated 1483.

HALL, usually a large tent for warlike uses, seems to mean the complete set of hangings for a chamber. Thus Margery Argentine in 1427 bequeaths "a steyned hall."—*Rokewode's Suffolk*, p. 290.

HARNEYS, armour, 9.

HASE, have or hast, 117, &c.

HE, for she, 23.

HOLLY, holly, 95.

HUMANYTE, courtesy, 25.

HYGHT, named, 15, 16.

HISTORIAL, historical, 10, 15, 208.

I.

ICHE, each, 112.

IERARCHYES, Hierarchies, 61, 115.

INFORTUNE, misfortune, 194.

INSTRUCTE, instructed, 75.

IN SYGHT, in presence, 83, 161.

INTERIOUSLY, internally, 183.

JUTES, people of Jutland, 6.

K.

KYNDE, course of Kynde, course of nature, 98, 106, 193.

L.

LAD, one of low condition. Lad to wed a lady is inconvenient, 38.

LAYTH, probably lightening, akin to laye, or lowe, a flame, 138.

GLOSSARY:

LEED, laid, buried, 19.
 LENT, dwelling, abiding, Sax. word, Lenge.
 to dwell, 98, 119.
 LETTEN, let, permitted, 183.
 LETTYNGE, obstructing, 187.
 LEVE YE ME, believe me, 32, 84.
 LEVER, rather, preferred, 76.
 LOSE, destroy, 39.
 LOVERS, friends, 47.
 LUSTY eloquence, vigorous, 37.
 LYCENSE, leave, farewell, 65, 78, permis-
 sion, 6, 36, 43, 99; 136, 152, 158, 186.
 LYHTNESSE, nimble, quick, 114.
 LYST, like, desire, 135.
 LYEN, plur. of lye, 11.

M.

MACHORYTE, anchorite, 103.
 MACULATE, defiled, 104, 126.
 MAGNIFIEN, magnify, 169, 197, 207.
 MAKEN, make, 134.
 MARGARYTE, pearl, or flower, daisy, 16.
 MAY, maiden, young woman, 27.
 MEAN, intercession, 172. "Meene, or me-
 dyatowre, *mediator*."—*Prompt. Parv.*
 "Woman that is meane for any man.
advocate.—*Palsgrave*.
 MEDE, reward, 13, 17, 18.
 MEDLED, mingled inconveniently, 117.
 MEMORALL, memorable, 8.
 MEMORATIVE, memorable, 41, 153.
 MEMOROUS, memorable, 6, 11, 104, 185.
 MENDES, amends, 47.
 MERCYABLE, pitiful, 95, 102, 175.
 MINISSE, diminish, 208.
 MONYALL, recluse, nun, 4, 81, 115, 145,
 168, 197, 205; monialis, *Lat.* moniale,
Fr.
 MOYNES, nun, 55, 59, 68, 80, 93, 130;
 molnesse, *old Fr.*
 MUTATION, taking the contrary course, 190.
 MYCLE, much, great, 144, 145, 146, 153,
 157, 172, 174, &c.
 MYNSTERS, servants, waiters, 64, 94.

N.

NAT, not, 135, &c. &c.
 NAY, it is no nay, there is no denying it,
 134.
 NE, nor, 54, 83, 100, 102, 117, 148.
 NOMINATE, named, 20, 22, 87, 88, 93,
 &c. &c.
 NOMYNTON, nomination, mention, 7.

O.

OBSERVEEN, plur. of observe, 1.
 ODIBLE, odious, 138.
 OR, before, 95, 169, 172, 194.
 ORDINANCE, direction, preparation, 62.
 ORELS, or else, 36, 38, 147, 202.
 OUT OF PRESENCE, out of sight, 41.

P.

PARAGE, parentage, 69.
 PARESSEHEN, parishioners, 194.
 PASSING, surpassing, 23, 27.
 PAYNYMS, pagans, 140, 141.
 PAYNT, flatter, 2.
 PENALITY, punishment, 174, 198.
 POLLERS, plunderers, 89.
 POLLUTE, defiled, 129.
 POLLYNGE, pillaging, 139.
 POLTYTKE, sagacious, 20.
 PRENOMINATE, forenamed, 139, 190.
 PREORDINATE, predestined, 143.
 PREPARAT, prepared, 1, 62, 114.
 PREPOTENT, very powerful, 14, 76, 182.
 PRETENDED, foreshewed, portended, 28.
 PROGENY, progenitors, 38.
 PROLONGING, postponing, 33.
 PROMISSION, permission, 129.
 PROMYTTE or promyt, promise, 178, 189.
 PROMYTTYNGE, 163, 166.
 PROMOTERS, informers, 89.
 PRYCE, prize, preeminence, 9.

GLOSSARY.

PRYME, daybreak, 40.
 PRYMATE, supreme governor, 1, 4.
 PUDICALL, chaste, modest, 142.
 PULCHRYTUD, 30.
 PYGHT, pitched, set up, 162, 181.
 PYNE, sorrow, 213.
 PYNNE, confine, 98. "Pynnyne, or put yn a pynfold, intrudo, detrudo." *Prompt. parv.* Ang. Sax. pyndan, includere.

R.

RECIDIVATION, relapse, 150.
 RECOURSED, ran back again, 42.
 REDACT, 212, from redactus, collected; gathered into the general body.
 REFUTED, rejected, cast aside, 57.
 REGALY, regality, royalty, 16.
 RELIQUE, 121, 124, 127, 143, 144, 146, 153, 202.
 REMANENT, remaining, 152.
 REPAIRED, repaired, 180.
 RESEMBLED, reassembled, 119.
 RESOLUTION, decay, resolving to original state, 123, 125, 129.
 RESOLVE, dissolve, melt, 54, 129, 130, 142.
 REVESSED, revested, clothed again, 127.
 REWARDED, rewarded, 84.
 ROBORATE, corroborate, confirm, 91.
 ROWME, place, rank, 56.
 RUDE, uneducated, 127.
 RUTILANT, glittering, brilliant, 128, 145, 205.
 RYVED, rife, frequent, 140.
 RYDDE, quit, relieved from, 109.

S.

SAD, saad, sayd. Sedate, discrete, 2, 23, 24, 27, 29, 38, 69, 81, 149, 155, 173.
 SADNESS, discretion, 51, 57, 69.
 SANCTYMONYAL, holy person, 96.
 SAPIENTLY, wisely, 37.

SAUTYNGE, assaulting, 163.
 SAYNE, plur. of say, 14.
 SEGREGATE, separated, 159.
 SENDE for sent, 10, 148, 149, 152, 156, 165, 183, 188, 202.
 SENSUALS, essentials, 205, 208.
 SEQUACES, successors, 212.
 SEQUENS, 197. The name of a particular kind of service book. Lat. med. Sequentarius, sequentialis. "Sequences." were chanted between the lessons at mass.

"Fist mainte sequance et mainte hymne."

SEYN, Sitting, Synod, 90.
 SHALMES, musical instrument, 63.
 SOTHE, truth, 2.
 SPYRE, spike, tendril, 60. Corn spires when the flowers are forming. "Spyre of corne or herbe, hastula."—*Prompt. Parv.* "Spyre of corne, barbe du ble."—*Palsgrave.*
 In the Wickliffe version, Isaiah 35 7. "Grenessee of rehed and Spier schal growe in dennes in whiche dwelliden dragouns bifor" and Isai. 18. 2. "Papyrus is a kynde of spier so great that bokis mowen be maid thereof." In a curious treatise on herbs, &c. Arund. MS. 42. "Pliny says, c. 81. ther is calamus scriptoris, swuche a stable as scryueners writen with, and that is a reed spere; for by olde tyme, ar us of penne were fowndyn men wryten with reedspyre, &c. p. 55. 6.

STABLE, steady, firm, 27, 32.
 STREETS, the milky way, 28: In German it is termed "die Milch-strasse"—as Phœbus surpassed other planets or stars, so doth, &c. perhaps, however, the word is a misprint for "starres."
 STUDY, "stode styll in a study," mused in perplexity, was in a brown study, 98.
 SUFFERAUNT, suffering, patient, 92.

GLOSSARY.

SUING, ensuing, following, 61.
 SUPERNALL, from above, 41.
 SUPPLE HER ROWME, supply her place, 93.
 SUPPLIN, supplicate, 212.
 SURGES, wax tapers, 144, 154, Fr.
 cierges, "cereus cereolus, serge." Voc-
 cab. Lat. Eng. Roy. MS. ix. c. xvii.
 "Ceroferarius, a bearer of serge." Harl.
 MS. 2257.

SYKERNESSE, security, 50.
 SYTH, since, 4.

T.

TAMYSMOUTH, mouth of Thames, 139.
 THRALL, bondage, 99, 113, 115, 117, 193,
 207, 212.
 — v. imprisoned, 115, 183.
 THO, those, 25, 58.
 TIMOROUS, occasioning alarm, 162.
 TOLLYNG, knocking, pulling, 193.
 TORTUOUS, torturing, 171.
 TOYNES, tunes, (Prologue of J. T.)
 TRANSCEND, pass over, 189.
 TRANSLACYON, removal, 124, 128, 146,
 159, 185.
 TRANSLATED, removed, 11, 79, 124, 128,
 153, 157, 181. converted, changed, 48,
 49, 86, 97.
 TRAYNE, trap, 39, 43.
 TROW YE, think ye, 83.
 TUYCYON, government, 5, 51. protection,
 111, 136, 145.
 TUMYLATE, buried, 26, 108, 126, 158.
 TWYN, tine, loss, sorrow, 160.

U.

UKNOWINGE, unknown, 99.

UNKYNDE, unnatural, unhealthy, 167.
 UNNETH, scarcely, 46. Saxon adv.
 URE, use, 64; Ure for use occurs in writers
 about the age of Bradshaw.
 USING HIM, conducting himself, 87.

V.

VALEAUNCE, valour, 9.
 VARNAUNT, verdant, 23, 104, 129.
 VENARE, VENERY, hunting, 8, 149.
 VENGEABLE, revengeful, 39.
 VERAY, verily, 100.
 VIRGINALL, virginlike, 23, 68, 110.
 VOLUPTÉ, voluptuousness, 81.
 VYLAYNE PEOPLE, of no rank, 36, 38.

W.

WANDELES, Vandals, 140.
 WETE, know, 82.
 WIS, e wis, I know, 156.
 WHOME, home, 189, 192, 201.
 WHYLOM, formerly, 3, 4, 20, 21, 117, 136,
 147, 209. Idleness whylom, former
 idleness, 3.
 WODELY, madly, 163.
 WOO, woe begone, sorrowful, 68.
 WROKEN, from wreke, revengeful, 39.

Y.

YCHEON, each one, 113.
 YERLE, early, 165.
 YLNES, evil, or idleness, 28.
 YMPE, graft, scion, 75.
 YOURE, yore, long ago, 60.

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- Alfrydus, 5, 138. Alfredus, Alredus, Aluredus, see Alredus, Biog. Dict. born at Beverley in Yorkshire, a secular priest, canon and treasurer of St. John's, Beverley. Wrote a History of Britain from the settlement of Brutus! to the year 1126, in which year he died. Hearne published an edition of his History, at Oxford, 1716, with a preface.
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